

Proceedings & Bylaws



“Imagine ... Living as God’s Saved and Sent Servants”

102nd Michigan District Convention

Concordia University Ann Arbor

June 24-26, 2018

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Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

”Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen”

Ephesians 3:20–21

Supplied by the ever-present promise of Christ to save and send forth His church into her life and mission under the cross, the Lord gathered 491 voting delegates and an additional 308 advisory delegates and guests for the 102nd Convention of The Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

United under the theme, *“Imagine ... Living as God’s Saved and Sent Servants,”* the convention opened with a celebration of the Divine Service, on June 24, 2018, at the Chapel of the Holy Trinity on the campus of Concordia University Ann Arbor.

During the convention, delegates addressed district targets in ministry and made important decisions regarding various governance, structure, and constitutional questions. Numerous floor resolutions were presented to reflect the unity and foster the faithful labors of God’s people in service to Christ for the sake of others.

The Proceedings detailed here are a record and reflection of significant effort by many committed servants to carry forward faithfully the work of Christ’s Church in this portion of His kingdom. The reports received by the convention gave testament to how God the Holy Spirit continues to bless the Michigan District. Diverse ministry ventures highlighted to the convention also gave rise to hopes for new undertakings.

By allegiance to Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, our beloved Michigan District will remain the community of confessing believers within this district’s 366 congregations living as God’s saved and sent servants. We acknowledge the devoted labors of laity, pastors, commissioned ministers, and district officials integrated into that share of Christ’s work indicated by these Proceedings.

The enclosed reports, minutes, and articles of these Proceedings outline the objectives, plans, and resources available to enable that work of Christian ministry under the Gospel.

May all who comprise the Michigan District continue to live as God’s saved and sent servants throughout the coming triennium as blessed recipients of God’s favor, forgiveness, and concord.



Rev. David H. Reed
Michigan District Secretary

Officers

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President (2019)
1st Vice-President: Rev. Herbert C. Mueller, Jr. (2019)
2nd Vice-President: Rev. Dr. Scott R. Murray (2019)
3rd Vice-President: Rev. Nabil S. Nour (2019)
4th Vice-President: Rev. Dr. John C. Wohlrabe, Jr. (2019)
5th Vice-President: Rev. Dr. Daniel Preus (2019)

6th Vice-President: Rev. Christopher S. Esget (2019)
Secretary: Rev. Dr. John W. Sias (2019)
Chief Administrative Officer: Mr. Frank Simek (2019)
Chief Financial Officer: Mr. Jerald C. Wulf (Appointed)
Chief Mission Officer: Rev. Kevin D. Robson (Appointed)

Michigan District

Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier, President (2021)

1st Vice-President: Rev. Mark D. Brandt (2021)
2nd Vice-President: Rev. Dean M. Davenport (2021)
3rd Vice-President: Rev. David A. Davis (2021)

4th Vice-President: Rev. John M. Duerr (2021)
Secretary: Rev. Dr. Justin P. Rossow (2021)
Treasurer: Mrs. Bonnie L. Mann (Appointed)

Michigan District Circuit Visitors

(2021)

1. Charles B. Burhop
2. Jason L. Mandley
3. Timothy P. Azzam
4. William C. Winter
5. Samuel B. Reith
6. Erwin M. Hutter
7. Kenneth D. Lueke
8. G. Stevens Bagnall
9. Gary L. Bender
10. William W. Hessler
11. Clifford F. Bira
12. Daniel A. Wonderly
13. Gary L. Beck
14. Gerhardt A. Doroh
15. Barry L. Mueller

16. Craig M. Meyer
17. Matthew G. Schuler
18. Peter S. Nickel
19. John E. Merrill
20. Steven J. Essenburg
21. Eddie Morales
23. Erik R. Schmidt
24. Jeffrey E. Heimsoth
25. Andrew D. Gruenhagen
26. Terry A. Nelson
27. Joel S. Eden
28. Thomas L. Schroeder
29. Donald O. Neuendorf
30. Joel H. Sarrault
31. Matthew A. Peters

32. Charles W. Webb
33. Dennis D. Rahn
34. John A. Bookshaw
35. G. Travis Downs
36. Edward W. Filter
37. Jeffrey M. Wilhelm
38. Dennis L. Lassanske
39. Michael M. Goers
40. Jason P. Peterson
41. David J. Rufner
42. Karl Streng
43. Michael J. Roth
44. Aaron B. Chittick

Boards and Committees

Board of Directors

Region

Metro East: (2024)
West: (2024)
Metro West: (2021)
North & East: (2021)

Ordained

Greg S. Griffith
Craig L. Bickel
Paul M. Moldenhauer
J. Derek Riddle

Commissioned

Natalie A. Haupt
Lori S. Wieneke
Daniel R. Burk
Eric M. Hagenow

Laypersons

Stephen R. Boergert
Heather Bigelow
Scott Beam
Dale Gust

Richard H. Stathakis
O. Dennis Sohn
James M. Riske, Jr.
Jeffrey Reinbold

Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees

Rostered

Robert B. Appold (2021)
Erik K. Cloeter (2024)

Commissioned

Julian Petzold (2021)

Laypersons

Julie C. Hoegeman (2021)
Kurt C. Kuck (2021)
Timothy H. Haberling (2024)
Jeffrey T. Roscoe (2024)
Eric Prisby (2021)
David C. C. Eberhard (2024)

District President Representative: John M. Duerr

Staff: James R. Saalfeld, CEO; John Bates, President; Andrew Sohn, VP for Marketing and Relations

2021 Convention Nominating Committee

Region

Metro East:
Metro West:
North & East:
West:

Ordained

Thomas F. Fischer
Andrew D. Gruenhagen
J. Derek Riddle
Thomas W. Vanderbilt

Commissioned

Matthew D. Tschudy
Matthew D. M. Dummann
Stephanie L. Baarck
Luke M. Esselman

Laypersons

Laura Davis
Philip M. Krauss II
John W. Nutzmann
William L. Boice

Commission for Church Worker Care

Ordained

Gary L. Beck
Ryan R. Peterson
Daniel W. Ramthun
Robert E. Kasper

Commissioned

Gregory S. Arnett
Beverly J. Koch
Kathy A. Krause
Amanda J. Neumeyer
Carolyn I. Bira

Laypersons

Christie Hansard

Ex-Officio: Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier

Commission on Deacon Qualification

Ordained

Rev. Todd I. Frusti
Rev. Dr. John A. Herzog
Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper, Advisory
Rev. Dr. Robert Schultz, Advisory

Commissioned

Mr. Dale Vorwerk

Laypersons

Mrs. Christine Brown
Mr. Walter W. Storm

District Reconcilers

Ordained

Rev. Michael J. Roth

Laypersons

Mr. George M. McCain
Mr. Duane A. Renken

New/Revised Constitution Committee

Rev. Theodore Voll, Chairman, Rev. Arnold H. Brammeier, Mr. Keith M. Altenburg, Mr. Aaron J. Baylis

District Legal Counsel

Mr. Dana Dever

District Standing Committees

Stewardship Committee:

Mr. Ronald J. Chewning, Rev. John M. Duerr, Rev. R. William Roper, Rev. Stephen E. Schilke, Rev. Daniel C. Meckes, Rev. Dr. Richard J. Wolfram

Education Committee:

Mr. Daniel R. Burk, Mr. Joel K. Neumeyer, Mr. Julian Petzold, Mr. Bradley D. Feenstra, Ms. Laura Harvey, Mr. Roger W. Wolter, Mr. Gregory K. Johnson, Mr. Matthew Couser, Ms. Jennifer A. Enge, Mr. Richard W. Schumacher, Ms. Cindy Brown, Mr. Steven D. Meseke, Mr. David Kaiser

District Committees

Endowment Advisory Council:

Mr. John H. Bates, Mr. Jeremy Frank, Mr. Michael W. Greve, Mr. Adam Heinlein, Mr. Stephen List, Mrs. Bonnie L. Mann, Mr. David P. E. Vallie
Non-Voting Members: Mr. Chad R. Woltemath, Mr. Raymond J. Zavada

Junior High Gathering Planning Committee:

Mr. James Anderson, Mrs. Kathy Duvendeck, Mr. Luke Esselman, Mrs. Kristin Hardy, Ms. Brenda Heissenbuettel, Mrs. Terri Kober, Mrs. Janelle Meckes, Mrs. Karen Reincke, Mrs. Stephanie Rummel

Senior High Gathering Planning Committee:

Mr. James Anderson, Rev. James Bruner, Mrs. Kristen Hardy, Mr. Seth Hinz, Mrs. Mary Koboldt, Mrs. Janelle Meckes, Mr. Keith Minda, Dr. Sara Pendleton, Mrs. Jennifer Rossi, Mrs. Stephanie Rummel, Rev. Bill Yonker

Lutheran Adult Gathering Planning Committee:

Dan and Patti Bogema, Kristie DeBoer, Dennis Sohn, Keith and Kim Waller, Rev. Galan and Barb Walther

Principals' Planning Committee:

Mr. Daniel D. Stoelting, Mr. Daniel R. Burk, Ms. Jennifer A. Enge, Mr. Matt Couser

School Accreditation Committee:

Mrs. Janet LaRocque, Mrs. Cynthia Brown, Mr. Paul Looker, Mr. David Waltz, Mr. Brian Young, Mr. Julian Petzold, Ms. Lori Milory, Mr. Bob Burgess, Mr. Levi Bringold, Mr. Todd Pehlke

Early Childhood Cabinet:

Mrs. Kelley J. Fehn, Mrs. Deborah M. McDonald, Mrs. Dawn E. States, Mrs. Kathryn L. Pearson, Mrs. Kathryn J. Hartfield, Ms. Jennifer J. Welch, Mrs. Courtni Holst, Ms. Gloria D. Fahlsing

State Basketball Committee:

Mr. Timothy C. Siekmann, Mr. Jeffrey S. Young, Mr. David M. King, Mr. Mark D. Schiefer, Mr. Joel K. Neumeyer, Mr. Scott R. Neumeyer, Mr. James O. Bunkelmann, Mr. Kyle Thoms, Mr. Justin N. Garcia, Mr. Eric M. Hagenow, Mr. Caleb O'Hara

State Track Committee:

Mr. John P. Boldt, Mrs. Jessica Carter, Mr. Bruce Braun, Mr. Kurt R. Hofmeister, Mr. Timothy O. Siekmann

Finance Committee:

Mr. Scott Beam, Mr. Steven R. Boergert, Mr. Eric M. Hagenow, Rev. David P. E. Maier, Mrs. Bonnie L. Mann, Rev. Paul M. Moldenhauer, Mr. Chad R. Woltemath

Staff

Office of the President

Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier, President
Rev. Dr. Robert E. Kasper, Asst. to the President – Congregation Ministries / Ministry Support
Rev. Todd A. Jones, Asst. to the President – Mission and Education Support
Rev. Norman A. Koy, Call List Support
Laurie A. Brown, Executive Asst. to the President
Martha Wohlfeil, Administrative Asst. – President's Office
Julie A. Nielsen-Schmidt, Chaplain – University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor
Barbara J. Laughlin Adler, Archivist – Zimmerman Library

Missionaries at Large

Rev. Christopher R. Bodley, Missionary at Large in Detroit for A2E
Rev. Steven J. Essenburg, Missionary at Large in Detroit
Rev. Dr. Bradley J. Yops, Missionary at Large in Flint

Congregation Ministries

Rev. Randy L. Johnson, Asst. to the President – Congregation Mission and Ministries, North Zone
Rev. Galan D. Walther, Asst. to the President – Congregation Mission and Ministries, Southwest and Thumb Zones / Family Ministries
Gail L. Milatz, Administrative Asst. – Congregation Ministries
Rev. Dr. Richard J. Wolfram, Asst. to the President – Stewardship Ministries

Lutheran Day Schools

Travis G. Grulke, Asst. to the President – Superintendent of Schools
Charles A. Winterstein, Asst. to the Superintendent of Schools
Kelly Fehn, Early Childhood Consultant
Carol Williams, Administrative Asst. – Schools
Jennifer A. Rumberger, Administrative Asst. – Education / Stewardship / Database

Communications

Debby S. Fall, Asst. to the President – Communications
Elisa Schulz, Staff Writer / Copy Editor / Photographer

Development

Raymond J. Zavada, Asst. to the President – Development
Linda M. Ekong, Administrative Asst. – Development / Art Director

Business/Finance

Chad R. Woltemath, Asst. to the President – Business / Finance
Donna Conrad, Administrative Asst. – Business / Finance
Debra Hughes, Event Coordinator / Accountant
Chad Moyer, Properties Manager

List of Registrants

by: Rev. David Reed, District Secretary

This list contains only the names of those who actually registered and attended the convention. The entire list of professional church workers and congregations of the Michigan District appeared in the Convention Workbook and is not repeated here.

Ministers – Ordained, Voting

Adams, Douglas M. - Trinity, Berrien Springs
Alexander, Arul J. - Faith Tamil, Troy
Andrzejewski, Darryl L. - Historic Trinity, Detroit
Appold, Paul C. - Trinity, Muskegon
Appold, Robert B. - St. Matthew, Grand Rapids
Azzam, Timothy P. - Trinity, Oscoda
Bagnall, George Stevens - Good Shepherd, Cass City
Ball, Joshua T. - St. John, Ray
Bartz, Robert O. - St. Peter, Three Rivers
Bartzsch, Thomas W. - Messiah, Grand Rapids
Barz, Daniel S. - St. Paul, Buchanan
Baseley, Joel R. - Emmanuel, Dearborn
Beck, Gary L. - St. Mark, Flint
Behnke, Timothy J. - St. John, Brant
Bender, Gary L. - Immanuel, Wheeler
Berlin, Mark E. - Redeemer, Interlochen
Biber, Paul R. - Good Shepherd, Saginaw
Bickel, Craig L. - Immanuel, Grand Rapids
Biermann, Todd A. - Faith, Grand Blanc
Bira, Clifford F. - Holy Cross, Flushing
Blythe, Richard J. - St. Paul, Trenton
Bode, Arthur J. - Bethlehem, Engadine / Grace, Germfask
Boehne, Thomas V. - St. John's, Ludington
Bollinger, Timothy R. - Shepherd's Gate, Shelby Township
Bookshaw, John A. - St. Peter's, Big Rapids
Boos, Antonio C. - Faith, Troy
Boyer, Michael D. - Immanuel, Sebewaing
Brand, Timothy J. - St. Paul, Caledonia
Brooks, John W. - St. James, Montague
Bruner, James R. - St. Paul, Millington
Brunworth, Todd J. - Christ Our Savior, Holland
Burgess, Jeffrey - St. Matthew, Mancelona
Burhop, Charles B. - Sault Ste Marie / St. Paul, Kincheloe
Burhop, Daniel G. O. - Trinity, Reese
Carrier, John S. - Mount Calvary, Detroit
Chinery, James D. - St. Martin, Birch Run
Chittick, Aaron B. - St. Paul, Coldwater
Clark, Paul M. - St. Paul, Fowler
Cloeter, Erik K. - Messiah, Clio
Cordts, Frederick T. - St. John, Au Gres
Courson, Larry G. - Peace, Ann Arbor
Cullen, D. Lee, Jr. - Holy Ghost, Monroe
Davenport, Dean M. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia
Dent, Matthew T. - Bethlehem, Standish
DeVries, Phillip M. - Messiah, Saginaw
Dodge, David A. - St. John, Port Hope
Doellinger, Paul M. - St. Paul, Cassopolis
Doerner, Edward F. - Messiah, Midland
Downs, G. Travis - Trinity, Lansing
Draeger, Jeffrey G. - Our Redeemer, Washington
Duerr, John M. - Hope, Warren
Dumbrille, Dean G. - Trinity, Fenton
Eberlein, Scott P. - Open Arms, Belleville
Eggert, James F. - Holy Cross, Jenison
Eisinger, Alan P. - Holy Cross, Warren
Engel, Brant A. - Christ The King, Flint
Fairbairn, Christopher D. - St. Paul, Northville
Fenske, Shawn D. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
Ferguson, Jack D. - Faith, Hawks
Fienen, Daniel H. - Grace, Baldwin
Filter, Edward W. - St. Andrew, Portland
Flynn, Daniel J. - St. Stephen, Waterford
Frechette, Jeffrey D., Sr. - Bethlehem, Roseville
Fremer, Joseph - Good Shepherd, Lowell
Frusti, Todd I. - Trinity, Davison
Gaertner, Evan P. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham
Garber, Alexander C., IV - St. Peter's, Eastpointe
Garland, Curtis D. - Immanuel, Monroe
Garrison, Thomas B. - St. John and St. Peter, Sebewaing
Geml, Michael A. - Redeemer, Jackson
Gillaspie, Wesley S. - St. Michael's, Richville
Goers, Michael M. - St. Matthew, Spring Lake
Grafe, Stephen D. - St. John, Rochester
Grannis, Michael J. - Calvary, Lincoln Park
Graves, K. Frank - Mount Olive, Grand Rapids
Grenz, Greyson D. - Trinity, Wyandotte
Griffin, Marvin A., Sr. - St. Philips, Detroit
Griffith, Greg S. - Immanuel, Macomb
Grimm, Dale A. - Our Savior, Chelsea
Gruenhagen, Andrew D. - St. Michael, Wayne
Hales, Henry J. - St. John, Palms
Hall, Matthew A. - Faith, Bay City
Haller, Joshua T. - Grace, Fairgrove
Haller, Mark J. - St. Peter's, Richmond
Hauser, Paul A. - Zion, Hemlock
Heimsoth, Jeffrey E. - Trinity, Monroe
Helms, Steven C. - Holy Redeemer, Dryden
Herrod, J. Robert - First, Algonac
Herter, Paul W. - Hope, Adrian
Hess, Joel A. - Emmanuel, Cadillac
Hetzner, Mark W. - St. Thomas, Eastpointe
Hile, John A. - Heart of the Shepherd, Howell
Hoerr, Steven R. - St. Peter, Fair Haven
Hoffmeyer, Alex - Salem, Coloma
Hoyer, Joel F. - Grace, Coopersville
Hubbard, Bradley B. - St. Mark, Battle Creek
Huff, Mark L. - Faith, Port Huron
Jansen, Daniel L. - Faith, Prescott
Johnson, Andrew M. - Christ, Milford
Johnson, L. Daniel - St. Paul's, Hillsdale
Johnson, Randy L. - St. John, Cheboygan
Johnson, Russell D. - St. Luke, Clinton Township
Jones, Kevin C. - Immanuel, Bay City
Jung, David A. - St. John, Pinconning
Kassen, John E. - Prince Of Peace, Ortonville
Kempin, Daniel A. - St. John's, Midland
Khan, Khurram M. - All Nations, Sterling Heights
Koltz, Gary E. - Good Shepherd, Lake Orion
Kolzow, Calvin J., Jr. - Trinity, Sturgis
Koy, Norman A. - Crown Of Life, Rochester Hills
Krach, James M. - Our Savior, Gladwin
Krueger, James F. - Holy Cross, Saginaw
Krupsky, Justin A. - Trinity, Utica
Kuehl, Kyle I. - Trinity, Newberry
Kuhlmann, Kurt P. - St. John, Burr Oak
LaFeve, Joshua C. - Immanuel, Leland
Lee, Martin E. - St. John, Saint Johns
Lemley, Keith H. - Prince Of Peace, Farmington Hills
Liebich, Jonathan A. - Trinity, Buchanan
Llewellyn, Joseph J. - St. Paul, Hubbard Lake
Loewe, Timothy J. - Christ The King, Lambertville
Low, M. Robert - Faith, Mesick
Lucas, Bruce K. - Trinity, Traverse City
Lueke, Kenneth D. - Our Savior, Bad Axe
Lunneberg, Allen D. - Incarnate Word, Rochester Hills
Madson, Mark J. - Trinity, Port Huron
Majeski, Eric W. - Grace, Romeo
Mandley, Jason L. - St. John, Hillman
Martin, Gabriel J. - Zion, Tawas City
Matyas, Dennis W. - St. Paul, Bay City
McCarty, David J. - Emmanuel, Britton
Measel, Martin P. - Christ, Stevensville
Meckes, Daniel C. - Living Word, Rochester

Menz, Andrew P. - Zion, Auburn
 Messer, Thomas C. - Peace, Alma
 Meyer, Edward A. - St. Mark, Saginaw
 Milatz, Mark D. - Shepherd Of The Lakes, Brighton
 Miller, Randy J. - Cross Of Christ, Bloomfield Hills
 Moldenhauer, Paul M. - St. Matthew, Walled Lake
 Monson, Paul C. - St. Augustine, Troy
 Moore, Jeffery C. - St. Matthew, Westland
 Morales, Eddie - Outer Drive Faith, Detroit
 Morris, William L. - St. Peter, Hemlock
 Moyer, Jonathan J. - Faith, Highland
 Mueller, Barry L. - Christ, New Baltimore
 Muhle, Dean R. - St. Paul, Hale
 Naumann, Paul R. - St. Michael, Portage
 Neigh, Dennis J. - Faith, Harrisville
 Nelson, Terry A. - Cross of Christ, South Lyon
 Nemecek, Donald P. - Redeemer, De Tour Village / Drummond Island
 Newton, Steven M. - Grace, Canton
 Nickel, Peter S. - Huntington Woods, Huntington Woods
 Nihiser, James L. - St. Michael's & All Angels, Traverse City
 Nuttmann, Quentin T. - St. Peter, Saint Johns
 Oswald, Mark A. - Trinity, Conklin
 Parent, Raymond D. - Redford, Detroit
 Parker, Harrison S. C. - Living Water, Whitmore Lake
 Penhallegon, Philip W. - St. Paul, Milan
 Peters, Matthew A. - Zion, Petoskey
 Peterson, Jason P. - St. Peter's, Rockford
 Poellet, Dean R. - St. Matthew, Holt
 Polzin, Joseph W. - Trinity, Gaylord / Mount Hope, Grayling
 Prout, David L. - Cedar Crest, White Lake
 Rahn, Dennis D. - Trinity, Manistee
 Ramthun, Daniel W. - Guardian, Dearborn
 Redmann, James C. - Grace, Elk Rapids
 Reese, Ryan D. - Trinity, Warren
 Reith, Samuel B. - St. Paul, Sanford
 Richard, Gary L. - Trinity, Clinton Township
 Riddle, J. Derek - Peace, Rogers City
 Riggs, Robert V. - St. Paul, Hamburg
 Robinson, Richard E. - St. John, Detroit
 Roggow, Aaron W. - St. Paul, Ann Arbor
 Rohwer, Gary E. - Atonement, Dearborn
 Roland, Ronald B. - St. Andrew, Memphis
 Roper, R. William - St. Mark, Brooklyns
 Rossow, Justin P. - St. Luke, Ann Arbor
 Roth, Michael J. - Trinity, Saint Joseph
 Schaedig, Michael W. - St. Luke, Harrison
 Schian, Aaron T. - Grace, Auburn
 Schilke, Stephen E. - Hope, Linden
 Schindel, Bryan K. - Cross & Resurrection, Ypsilanti
 Schlak, Randall J. - Redeemer, Birmingham
 Schmidt, David P. - St. Paul, Royal Oak
 Schmidt, Erik R. - Community, Flat Rock
 Schouweiler, James A. - Redeemer, Fremont
 Schroeder, Thomas L. - Christ Our King, Saline
 Schuler, Matthew G. - Holy Cross, Oxford
 Schultz, Joshua M. - Immanuel, Alpena
 Schultz, Randall P. - Our Savior, Flint
 Schultz, Roderick D. - Our Redeemer, Dearborn
 Schwartz, John W. - St. Paul's, New Boston
 Schwieger, Alan J. - Immanuel, Saint Clair
 Seeber, Timothy W. - Zion, Kalamazoo
 Sherouse, M. Samuel, Jr. - Our Saviour, Armada
 Sherrill, North P., Jr. - Our Savior, Grand Rapids
 Sherry, David F. - Trinity, Bay City
 Sidwell, David H. - Immanuel, Kalamazoo
 Siefert, Gary L. - St. Paul's, Farmington Hills
 Sikora, E. Anthony - Hope, DeWitt
 Smith, Bradley A. - St. John, Fraser
 Snider, Merelyn R. - Trinity, Pinckney
 Sommerfeld, Scott G. - Trinity, Jackson
 Stahl, Michael G. - Trinity-St. James, Munger
 Starke, Stephen P. - St. John, Bay City
 Stauffer, W. Roger - Peace, Saginaw
 Steele, Cameron K. - St. Paul, Caro
 Stolarczyk, Steven M. - St. Paul, Unionville

Straub, Roger K. - Good Shepherd, Lansing
 Strenge, Karl N. - Redemption, Battle Creek
 Suggitt, Christopher - Good Shepherd, Caseville / St. Paul, Pigeon
 Sutton, A. Trevor - St. Luke, Haslett
 Sutton, David J. - Our Savior, Marlette
 Thiel, Steven E. - Bethlehem, Lewiston
 Tino, Richard L. - Peace, Sandusky
 Tkac, Russell S. - Peace, Waterford
 Todd, Kelly D. - Christ, Goodrich
 Tonn, Paul A. - Trinity, Reed City
 Travis, Howard S. - St. John, West Branch
 Ulledalen, Benjamin J. - Zion, Mount Pleasant
 Ulm, David M. - Good Shepherd, Chesterfield
 Undlin, Paul J. - Hosanna-Tabor, Redford
 Vanderbilt, Thomas W. - Messiah, Holt
 Vergin, Aaron H. - St. Mark's, West Bloomfield
 Vogeli, Mitchell R. - Nativity, Saint Charles
 Voigt, Eric W. - Immanuel, Rogers City
 Voll, Theodore E. - St. John, Houghton Lake
 Wade, Jeffrey E. - St. John, New Boston
 Wagner, Robert V. - Holy Cross, Belding
 Walsh, Jeffrey B. - St. Paul, Flint
 Walworth, Tyler A. - Our Savior Deaf, Birmingham
 Wangelin, William R. - Our Savior, Lansing
 Watters, Samuel P. - Living Word, Plymouth
 Wentzel, Michael W. - St. Mark, Kentwood
 Wenzelburger, Kurt R. - St. John's, Grand Haven
 Wilhelm, Jeffrey M. - Mount Calvary, Greenville
 Willenbrock, William K. - Faith, Whitehall
 Winningham, David C. - Ascension, East Lansing
 Winningham, Ryan A. - Zion, Holland
 Witte, Mark K. - Grace, Monroe
 Woell, Brennan A. - St. Luke, Nunica
 Wollberg, Trenton N. - Holy Cross, Onaway
 Wonderly, Daniel A. - Pilgrim, Burton
 Young, Paul V. - Prince Of Peace, Clare
 Zeile, Richard A. - St. John's, Taylor

Ministers – Ordained, Advisory

Arendell, Mark W. - St. Peter, Macomb
 Arndt, Paul W. - Faith, Troy
 Baggot, Elamin M. - St. Luke, Haslett
 Bakker, Jonathon J. - Zion, Mount Pleasant
 Bayer, Robert F. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia
 Blain, James H. - Emeritus, Grand Rapids
 Bodley, Christopher R. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Boerger, Paul M. - Emeritus, Rogers City
 Brandt, Mark D. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
 Bushuiakovish, Mark R. - Christ The King, Southgate
 Davis, David A. - St. Luke, Haslett
 Doroh, Gerhardt A. - Emeritus, Columbus
 Duncan, Randall S. - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Dunseth, Thomas W. - Mill Neck, Mill Neck
 Eden, Joel S. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia
 Edenfield, Harry N. - Emeritus, Brownstown
 Elliott, Peter W. - St. John, Fraser
 Erickson, James D. - Immanuel, Alpena
 Garrison, Bradley G. - Emeritus, Fenton
 Gibbons, Nikolai J. - Immanuel, Macomb
 Grimm, Gerald E. - Emeritus, Macomb
 Haupt, Dieter E. - Emeritus, Holland
 Hein, Matthew C. - St. Luke, Ann Arbor
 Heins, John L. - Emeritus, Saline
 Heise, Matthew W. - Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Macomb
 Hemme, Seth R. - Zion, Auburn
 Hill, James M. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia
 Hoesman, C. William - Emeritus, Frankenmuth
 Hopkins, Theodore J. - Concordia University Ann Arbor
 Janetzke, Douglas K. - Emeritus, Midland
 Johnson, Scott E. - St. Paul's, Hillsdale
 Jones, Todd A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Kasper, Robert E. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Keat, James D. - Emeritus, Leslie
 Khan, Farrukh M. - All Nations, Sterling Heights

Kirschke, Gary A. - Emeritus, Wyoming
 Kleimola, Dale M. - Emeritus, Jackson
 Kroll, Micheal D. - Emeritus, East Lansing
 Lambart, Kurt E. -
 Maier, David P. E. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Marshall, Robert H., Jr. - Emeritus, Riverview
 Merrill, John E. - Emeritus, Roseville
 Meyer, Craig M. - Emeritus, Sterling Heights
 Neuendorf, Donald O. - St. Paul, Ann Arbor
 Paulson, Warren L. - Emeritus, Ypsilanti
 Peterson, Ryan R. - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Pflug, Mark R. - Emeritus, Saline
 Pollatz, Paul A. - Emeritus, Garden City
 Pronsati, Andrew - St. Paul, Trenton
 Rahn, Robert L. - Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Macomb
 Rathje, John R. - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Reed, David H. - Emeritus, Sebawaing
 Roberts, Robert R. - Emeritus, Bay City
 Sattelmeier, Glenn O. - Emeritus, Rochester Hills
 Schmitt, Frederick A. - Emeritus, Sterling Heights
 Schroeder, James E. - Our Savior, Scottville
 Schultz, Robert J. - Emeritus, Freeland
 Schulz, Charles R. - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Scott, Robert G. - Faith, Grand Blanc
 Sproul, John M. - Cross Of Christ, Bloomfield Hills
 Stahlhut, Stephen C. - Emeritus, Linden
 Steeh, Edward J. - Emeritus, Macomb
 VanBriggle, Richard A. - St. Thomas, Eastpointe
 Walther, Galan D. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Warsinski, Larry A. - Emeritus, Clyde
 Washington, Oliver G., Jr. - St. Stephen, Detroit
 Williams, Jonathan V. - St. Peter's, Big Rapids
 Winter, William C. - Emeritus, Prudenville
 Wolff, Paul A. - Emmanuel, Dearborn
 Wolfram, Richard J. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Yohannes, Z. Zerit - St. Luke, Haslett
 Yops, Bradley J. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor

Lay Delegates, Voting

Addison, Lutheran Church Of The Lakes - Pollack, Kenneth W.
 Adrian, St. John's - McDowell, John
 Albion, St. Paul - Shedd, J Brad
 Algonac, First - Podolan, Edward
 Alma, Peace - Messer, Lisa
 Alpena, Immanuel - Lang, Robert T.
 Ann Arbor, Peace - Ramos, Juan
 Ann Arbor, St. Luke - Woltemath, Chad R.
 Ann Arbor, St. Paul - Burch, John
 Armada, Our Saviour - Morang, Ronald
 Au Gres, St. John - Klein, Dennis R.
 Auburn, Grace - Yaeger, Bob
 Auburn, Zion - Gray, Dean
 Bad Axe, Our Savior - Bush, Kenneth
 Baldwin, Grace - Gibbons, William R.
 Battle Creek, Redemption - Lantinga, Orvan
 Battle Creek, St. Mark - Langfeldt, Jack E.
 Bay City, Faith - Mueller, Thomas J.
 Bay City, Immanuel - Jones, Amy M.
 Bay City, St. John - Enge, Jonathan M.
 Bay City, St. Paul - Helmreich, Ben
 Belding, Holy Cross - Spenle, Lori A.
 Belleville, Open Arms - Richert, Joel F. O.
 Berrien Springs, Trinity - Krieger, Timothy
 Big Rapids, St. Peter's - Wilkinson, John M.
 Birch Run, St. Martin - Warnick, John
 Birmingham, Our Shepherd - Hynes, Terrence
 Birmingham, Redeemer - Greenwalt, James
 Bloomfield Hills, Cross Of Christ - Schwab, Cary
 Boyne City, Christ - Higgins, Jay T.
 Brant, St. John - Miller, Scott
 Bridgeport, Faith - Lewis, Richard E.
 Brighton, Shepherd Of The Lakes - Chauvin, William
 Britton, Emmanuel - Siebarth, Bruce
 Brooklyn, St. Mark - McCain, Michael
 Buchanan, St. Paul - Collins, Donald

Buchanan, Trinity - King, Steven A.
 Burr Oak, St. John - Milliman, Jon
 Cadillac, Emmanuel - Schellhas, Michael
 Caledonia, St. Paul - Miller, David L
 Canton, Grace - West, Phillip
 Caro, St. Paul - Gusko, Ruth
 Cass City, Good Shepherd - Balzer, Daniel H.
 Cassopolis, St. Paul - Jerdon, Larry L.
 Charlotte, First - Sergent, Dennis
 Cheboygan, St. John - Rotter, Gregory
 Chelsea, Our Savior - Whitley, Michelle
 Chesterfield, Good Shepherd - Sprow, Linda L.
 Clinton Township, St. Luke - Kijorski, Andrew
 Clinton Township, Trinity - Delitala, Manny
 Clio, Messiah - Nutzmam, John W.
 Coldwater, St. Paul - Mobley, Christopher
 Conklin, Trinity - Sheridan, Dwight
 Coopersville, Grace - Draper, Barbara K
 Davison, Trinity - Geisler, Robert
 Dearborn, Atonement - Jacobsson, Jonn
 Dearborn, Emmanuel - Schott, William M.
 Dearborn, Guardian - Glennie, Bruce
 Dearborn, Our Redeemer - Clements, James
 Detroit, Historic Trinity - Nickodemus, Daniel
 Detroit, Mount Calvary - Witte, Daryl
 Detroit, Outer Drive Faith - Pyles, Dianna
 Detroit, Redford - Mann, Jean M.
 Detroit, St. John - Henry, Willie Marie
 Detroit, St. Stephen - Solano, John
 DeWitt, Hope - Sikora, Becky Jo
 Dryden, Holy Redeemer - See, Walter
 East Lansing, Ascension - Phillips, James BJr
 Eastpointe, St. Peter's - Leidecker, Rory B.
 Eastpointe, St. Thomas - Wensink, Arthur
 Elk Rapids, Grace - Ahrens, Lee
 Engadine, Bethlehem - Bode, Jody
 Fair Haven, St. Peter - Carr, Gary
 Fairgrove, Grace - Reid, Thomas M.
 Farmington Hills, Prince Of Peace - Vaaler, Kurt
 Fenton, Trinity - Paehlke, Glenn A.
 Flat Rock, Community - Ritthaler, Jeffrey
 Flint, Lamb of God - Prosch, Gerald H.
 Flint, Our Savior - Roof, Benjamin
 Flint, St. Mark - Schacher, Rick
 Flint, St. Paul - Adams, Dale R.
 Fowler, St. Paul - Clark, Alexander
 Frankenmuth, St. Lorenz - DeSimpelare, Barbara J.
 Fraser, St. John - Huser, Dennis W.
 Gaylord, Trinity - Bendick, Kenneth R.
 Gladwin, Our Savior - Wagner, Kenneth
 Goodrich, Christ - Todd, Linda
 Grand Blanc, Faith - Baehr, Gregory
 Grand Haven, St. John's - Bosch, Benjamin
 Grand Rapids, Immanuel - Jung, Bill
 Grand Rapids, Messiah - Hula, Daniel
 Grand Rapids, Our Savior - Iseler, Earl A.
 Grand Rapids, St. James - Robart, Dale
 Grand Rapids, St. Matthew - Scholtens, Cori
 Greenville, Mount Calvary - Philley, Wendi
 Hamburg, St. Paul - Mowers, Christopher I.
 Harrison, St. Luke - Shipley, David L.
 Harrisville, Faith - Neigh, Barbara
 Haslett, St. Luke - Kleuckling, Gaylord
 Hemlock, St. Peter - Bluemer, James
 Hemlock, Zion - Bohn, Paul
 Highland, Faith - Lombardo, Thomas C.
 Hillman, St. John - Cordes, Scott A.
 Hillsdale, St. Paul's - Kilgore, Aaron
 Holland, Christ Our Savior - Klug, John
 Holland, Zion - Pohanka, David
 Holt, Messiah - Hammes, Bill
 Holt, St. Matthew - Vigés, Philip
 Houghton Lake, St. John - Daellenbach, Peter
 Howell, Heart of the Shepherd - Weber, Bo
 Hubbard Lake, St. Paul - Miller, Leslie

Huntington Woods, Huntington Woods - Ducharme, Willard C.
 Imlay City, Family of Christ - Battaglia, Anthony
 Interlochen, Redeemer - Rupert, James
 Ionia, St. John - Cotter, David F.
 Jackson, Trinity - Wagner, Lloyd , Sr.
 Jenison, Holy Cross - Vetter, John
 Kentwood, St. Mark - Pillsbury, Paul E.
 Kinde, St. Peter - Brade, Donald E.
 Lake Orion, Good Shepherd - Martin, Judy
 Lambertville, Christ The King - Parisien, Robert
 Lansing, Good Shepherd - Moritz, Randall
 Lansing, Our Savior - Sundstrom, James
 Lansing, Trinity - Knudson, Bill
 Lapeer, St. Paul - Bowerman, Terry
 Lewiston, Bethlehem - Thiel, Susan
 Lexington, St. Matthew - Jarosz, Edward
 Lincoln Park, Calvary - Gerring, Norman J.
 Linden, Hope - Siegwald, Ronald C.
 Livonia, Christ Our Savior - Leeds, Thomas
 Lowell, Good Shepherd - Betz, Gary
 Ludington, St. John's - Abel, Kenneth E.
 Macomb, Immanuel - Van Hevel, Brian
 Mancelona, St. Matthew - Atkinson, Patty L.
 Manistee, Trinity - Staffeld, Gregory
 Marlette, Our Savior - Stoick, Robert
 Marysville, Light of Christ - Mumford, Ronald
 Memphis, St. Andrew - Hansen, Andrew J.
 Mesick, Faith - Diefenbach, John C.
 Midland, Messiah - Kreil, Dennis J.
 Midland, Our Savior - Lyvere, Gary D.
 Midland, St. John's - Thompson, Ethan S.
 Milan, St. Paul - Pyle, Barry W.
 Milford, Christ - Beam, Scott
 Millington, St. Paul - Kern, Steven H.
 Mio, Living Water - Ferguson, Timothy J.
 Monroe, Grace - Auxter, Robert C, Jr.
 Monroe, Holy Ghost - Kregel, Dale A.
 Monroe, Immanuel - Connelly, Jennifer
 Monroe, Trinity - Toburen, Cathy
 Mount Pleasant, Zion - Couturier, Jeremy
 Munger, Trinity-St. James - Schumacher, Bill
 Muskegon, Our Redeemer - Rademaker, Lora
 Muskegon, Trinity - Sorensen, Tim
 New Baltimore, Christ - Appling, Susan
 New Boston, St. John - Davis, David A.
 New Boston, St. Paul's - Canell, Russell
 Newberry, Trinity - Price, Donald
 Northville, St. Paul - Hoffmeier, Barbara
 Nunica, St. Luke - Schultz, Paul
 Onaway, Holy Cross - Kerridge, Dave
 Onekama, Trinity - Johnson, David W.
 Ortonville, Prince Of Peace - Cornea, Jacob
 Oscoda, Trinity - Azzam, Kathy L.
 Otisville, St. Timothy - Kircoff, Kenneth A.
 Palms, St. John - Hales, Catherine
 Petoskey, Zion - Geuder, Frederick W.
 Pinckney, Trinity - Laible, Lorraine
 Pinconning, St. John - Michalski, Don F.
 Plymouth, Living Word - Cooley, Jim
 Port Hope, St. John - Finkel, Donald W.
 Port Huron, Faith - Warsinski, Mark C.
 Port Huron, Trinity - Madson, Elizabeth
 Portage, St. Michael - Lewis, Vern
 Portland, St. Andrew - Haworth, Mark D.
 Prescott, Faith - Chmielewski, Robert
 Quincy, Prince Of Peace - Beier, Beverly J.
 Ray, St. John - Boeder, James
 Redford, Hosanna-Tabor - Greniewicki, Caleb
 Reed City, Trinity - Emington, Doug
 Reese, Trinity - Brechtelsbauer, Doug
 Rochester Hills, Crown Of Life - Bane, Frederick
 Rochester Hills, Incarnate Word - Iott, Philip
 Rochester, Living Word - Hagan, Dan
 Rochester, St. John - Kunze, Wayne
 Rockford, St. Peter's - Bohy, Jeff

Rogers City, Peace - Hellmuth, Catherine
 Rogers City, St. John - Hein, Stephen
 Romeo, Grace - Bower, Terry
 Roseville, Bethlehem - Romancheck, John
 Royal Oak, St. Paul - Schultz, Jim
 Saginaw, Bethlehem - Kerouac, Kenneth A.
 Saginaw, Good Shepherd - Smith, Mike
 Saginaw, Holy Cross - Grauf, Dawn
 Saginaw, Immanuel - Wojtowicz, Daniel A.
 Saginaw, Messiah - Winter, Patrick E.
 Saginaw, Peace - Periard, Michael
 Saginaw, St. Mark - Meyer, Diane
 Saint Charles, Nativity - LaBelle, Larry H.
 Saint Clair, Immanuel - Dunker, Steven
 Saint Ignace, Hope - Eskelinen, Andrew
 Saint Johns, St. John - Roberts, Gerald E.
 Saint Johns, St. Peter - Heimsoth, Jeremy E.
 Saint Joseph, Trinity - Matzke, Mark E.
 Sandusky, Peace - Keinath, Gerald
 Sanford, St. Paul - Sprenger, Mark
 Sault Sainte Marie, Saint Barnabas - Searight, Russell
 Sawyer, Trinity - Priest, Kenneth
 Sebewaing, Immanuel - Smith, Cynthia
 Sebewaing, St. John - Garrison, Karen
 Shelby Township, Peace - Brown, Laurie A.
 Shelby Township, Shepherd's Gate - Zael, Norman
 South Lyon, Cross of Christ - McFadden, Scott
 Southgate, Christ The King - Dutka, Harry F.
 Spring Lake, St. Matthew - Carter, David
 Standish, Bethlehem - Dent, Kelli L.
 Sterling Heights, All Nations - Masih, Arshad
 Stevensville, Christ - Scowcroft, Glenn
 Sturgis, Trinity - Kolzow, Lynda F.
 Tawas City, Zion - Hart, Gary M.
 Taylor, Our Redeemer - Howell, Walter
 Taylor, St. John's - Bias, Michael
 Three Rivers, St. Peter - Smallcombe, Edward H.
 Traverse City, St. Michael's & All Angels - Gaudette, Paul
 Traverse City, Trinity - Ford, George
 Trenton, St. Paul - Utter, Allan D.
 Troy, Faith - Boos, Jennifer
 Unionville, St. Paul - VanTol, Rebecca S.
 Utica, Trinity - Schroeder, Jon
 Walled Lake, St. Matthew - McDonald, Gaylen
 Warren, Holy Cross - Pepperman, John
 Warren, Hope - Niedbala, Martin J
 Warren, Trinity - Pouliot, Russell R.
 Washington, Our Redeemer - Riske, James M., Sr.
 Waterford, Peace - Poe, Robert L. III
 Wayne, St. Michael - Petrowsky, Harold A.
 Wellston, Beautiful Savior - Richardson, Jewel
 West Bloomfield, St. Mark's - O'Brien, James
 West Branch, St. John - La Tulip, Linda
 Westland, Salem National - Noel, Michele
 Westland, St. Matthew - Schwiebert, Weldon
 Wheeler, Immanuel - Neitzke, Steven
 Whitehall, Faith - Meinert, Dale
 Whitmore Lake, Living Water - Dignan, Wendy
 Wyandotte, Trinity - O'Neill, Daniel T.
 Ypsilanti, Cross & Resurrection - Dew, Thomas E.

Ministers – Commissioned, Advisory

Allen, Ronald M. - Emeritus, Ann Arbor
 Aufdemberge, Erwin J. - Emeritus, Macomb
 Aufdemberge, Theodore P. - Emeritus, Dexter
 Auger, Robert G., Jr. - Our Savior, Bad Axe
 Bakker, Anne E. K. - Zion, Mount Pleasant
 Bickel, Randall J. - St. Martin, Birch Run
 Bird, Terry L. - Trinity, Saint Joseph
 Block, Marajean A. - Emeritus, Lambertville
 Block, Richard A. - Emeritus, Lambertville
 Bode, Timothy A. - Christ The King, Southgate
 Brand, Susan L. - Trinity, Traverse City
 Brandt, John M. - Saginaw Valley Lutheran High, Saginaw
 Braun, Bruce N. - Emeritus, Westland

Brown, David C. - Lutheran High Westland, Westland
 Brown, Samantha M. - Good Shepherd, Saginaw
 Burk, Daniel R. - Christ The King, Southgate
 Busse, Donald R. - St. Paul, Trenton
 Carrier, Lori J. - Emeritus, Fort Gratiot
 DeBoer, Kristine K. - Our Savior, Lansing
 Edenfield, Marilyn J. - Emeritus, Brownstown
 Erber, Glenn R. - Emeritus, Jackson
 Fish, Dale W. - Emeritus, Bay City
 Freudenburg, Benjamin F. - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Garcia, Adan C. - Immanuel, Bay City
 Gerds, Fredrick A. - Emeritus, Royal Oak
 Gierach, Raymond C. - Emeritus, Macomb
 Griffin, Shirley A. - Emeritus, Allen Park
 Gross, Lisabeth K. - Hosanna-Tabor, Redford
 Grulke, Travis G. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Haupt, Natalie A. - Lutheran High North, Macomb
 Hausch, Michael F. - St. Paul, Hamburg
 Hire, Matthew J. - Community, Flat Rock
 Hoeft, Stacy J. - LSEM, Farmington Hills
 Hollman, Linda M. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia
 Hooper, Susan L. - Faith, Grand Blanc
 Johnson, Paul M. - St. Paul, Trenton
 Jones, Karen B. - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Kempff, Elna M. - Emeritus, Reese
 Keup, Karen L. - Emeritus, Saginaw
 Keup, Ronald W. - Emeritus, Saginaw
 Kittleman, Joshua B. - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Kohtz, Roger O. - Emeritus, Dearborn
 Krieger, Ruth A. - Trinity, Berrien Springs
 Krueger, Richard C. - Messiah, Grand Rapids
 Krueger, Steven R. - Community, Flat Rock
 Laeder, Leroy D. - Emeritus, Midland
 Laughlin-Adler, Barbara J. - Emeritus, Ann Arbor
 Locke, George M. - Emeritus, Canton
 Lustila, Gerald J., Jr. - St. Paul, Bay City
 Mahler, William A. - Emeritus, Ypsilanti
 McDonald, Ian K. - Lutheran High Northwest, Rochester Hills
 Merrill, Kenlyn S. - Emeritus, Roseville
 Meseke, Steven D. - Lutheran H. S. Association, Rochester Hills
 Mol, James M. - St. Mark, Flint
 Moro, Martin L. III - LSEM, Farmington Hills
 Musa, Rahel - St. Luke, Haslett
 Nemecek, Carol A. - Emeritus, Drummond Island
 Neuendorf, Christel - LCMS Office of International Mission
 Pfeiffer, Ann M. - Emeritus, Westland
 Polk, Norma P. - Cross & Resurrection, Ypsilanti
 Reincke, John M. - Lutheran High North, Macomb
 Rupe, Dawn M. - Christ Our King, Saline
 Schaffer, Joel P. - St. John, New Boston
 Schalk, Linda S. - Emeritus, Hawks
 Schmidt, Paul M. - Emeritus, Melvindale
 Schnuell-Ruth, Karen D. -
 Schroeder, Kenneth W. - Emeritus, Rogers City
 Schultz, Robert L. - Emeritus, Traverse City
 Schumacher, James L. - Emeritus, Bay City
 Schumacher, Richard W., Jr. - LSEM, Farmington Hills
 Schwaegerle, Judy L. - Hosanna-Tabor, Redford
 Schwecke, Steven A. - Lutheran High Westland, Westland
 Singleton, Lisa A. - Trinity, Jackson
 Sorgatz, James F. - Emeritus, Saline
 Sprow, Keith R. - Emeritus, Chesterfield
 Stathakis, Carol B. - Peace, Shelby Township
 Steffens, Mark C. - Emeritus, Stevensville
 Strang, William J. - Emeritus, Westland
 Tedesco, Kimberly J. - St. Paul, Lapeer
 Thunder-Haab, Keturah A. - Emeritus, Ann Arbor
 Topel, Stanley R. - Emeritus, Sterling Heights
 Tschudy, Matthew D. - Lutheran High Northwest, Rochester Hills
 Walsh, Hannah R. - Faith, Port Huron
 Walsh, Kimber L. - Redeemer, Jackson
 Weismantel, Paul O. - St. Peter, Saint Johns
 Welch, Jennifer J. - Immanuel, Grand Rapids
 Weston, Amy J. - St. Matthew, Walled Lake
 Wills, Paul R. - Church Extension Fund, Ann Arbor

Winterstein, Charles A. - Emeritus, Brighton
 Witte, Lucie E. - Emeritus, Roseville
 Zieschang, Zachary M. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia

Other Registrants

Allen, Janet M. - Guest
 Aufdemberge, Judith - Guest
 Balzer, Ruth E. - Good Shepherd, Cass City
 Barr, Harry - Mission Central
 Boerger, Barbara - Guest
 Boergert, Stephen R. - Board of Directors, Ann Arbor
 Buhinicek, David - Faith, Ypsilanti
 Clous, Jenna - Padgett Communications
 Conrad, Donna - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Cusumano, Donna - Padgett Communications
 Ekong, Linda M. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Erber, Lois - Guest
 Eskelinen, Sue - Hope, Saint Ignace
 Fall, Deborah S. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Fauser, Randy - Grace Place Wellness Ministries
 Ferry, Patrick T. - Concordia University Wisconsin/ Ann Arbor
 Ferry, Rachel - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Fiedler, David - LCMS Foundation, Saint Louis
 Fish, Cheryl E. - Guest
 Gierach, Doreen G. - Guest
 Grainger, Donald - Immanuel, Rogers City
 Grimm, Lillian M. - Guest
 Gruber, Susan E. - Michigan District LWML
 Gust, Dale D. - Board of Directors, Ann Arbor
 Harrison, Matthew C. - LCMS, Saint Louis
 Haupt, Ruth A. - Guest
 Heins, Wilma - Guest
 Hinz, Seth - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Hoesman, Barbara - Guest
 Hoffman, David K. - Family of Christ, Imlay City
 Janetzke, Marguerite E. - Guest
 Kaufmann, Reinald - Guest
 Keat, Julianne - Guest
 Kersten, Alfred A. - Immanuel, Alpena
 Koch, Matthew P. - St. Paul Community, Pontiac
 Lo, Kan-Mui - Guest
 Low, Naomi - Faith, Mesick
 Magneson, Scott S. - Light of Christ, Marysville
 Maier, Patricia A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Mann, Bonnie L. - Board of Directors, Ann Arbor
 Martin, Ruth E. - Board of Directors, Ann Arbor
 McKeague, David W. - Parliamentarian
 Milatz, Gail L. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Miller, Coralie - St. Paul, Caledonia
 Neuenfeldt, Jerry - Zion, Hemlock
 Newman, Cindy - Missions, Texas District
 Newman, Michael W. - Missions, Texas District
 Nielsen-Schmidt, Julie A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Paulson, Virginia - Guest
 Pendred, Diana - St. John, Au Gres
 Peters, Meghan E. - Zion, Petoskey
 Pflug, Judith - Guest
 Raffel, John C. - Board of Directors, Ann Arbor
 Rast, Lawrence R., Jr. - Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne
 Reinbold, Jeffrey - Board of Directors, Ann Arbor
 Reincke, Karen L. - Immanuel, Macomb
 Riske, James M., Jr. - Board of Directors, Ann Arbor
 Roberts, Eileen B. - Guest
 Rumberger, Jennifer A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Salminen, Mary Kay - Guest
 Sanft, James F. - Concordia Plan Services, Saint Louis
 Sattelmeier, Lorraine - Guest
 Scahel, Nora - St. Paul, Milan
 Schalk, Wayne D. - Guest
 Schroeder, Lenita M. - Guest
 Schultz, Linda - St. Luke, Nunica
 Schulz, Elisa - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
 Schulze, Esther - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Schumacher, Laraine - Guest
 Smallcombe, Karen - St. Peter, Three Rivers

Soltwisch, Thomas L. - Hope, Adrian
Strobl, Julie A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
Thies, Gary - Mission Central
Tino, Evan, Jr. - Peace, Sandusky
Vieker, Jon D. - LCMS, Saint Louis
Walther, Barbara - Concordia University, Ann Arbor
Warsinski, Pamela J. - Guest
Weber, Russell C. - St. Peter, Macomb
Weismantel, Barbara - St. Peter, Saint Johns
Woell, Anna L. - St. Luke, Nunica
Wohlrabe, John C., Jr. - LCMS, Saint Louis
Wolfram, Judith A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
Woltemath, Heidi L. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
Woolsey, Billy R. - FiveTwo Network
Wright, Thomas - Guest
Zimmerman, Darrell W. - Grace Place Wellness Ministries

Zavada, Cynthia - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
Zavada, Raymond J. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor

Other Guests, Ministry Tent Exhibitors

Alrishmawi, Rida - Christian Olive Art
Altenburg, Keith M - MI District Constitution Review Committee
Ausen, Susan A. - Franklin Avenue Mission
Baird, Peter - Connection by Design
Bates, John H. - Church Extension Fund
Bauer, Marsha - Gifts For All God's Children
Baylis, Aaron J. - MI District Constitution Review Committee
Bohde, Donn E. - SBW Architects, LLC
Boice, William L. - Siberian Lutheran Mission Society
Bomberger, Rachel - Concordia Publishing House
Burmeister, Todd - Concordia Publishing House
Burmeister, William F. - Church Extension Fund
Bureson, Kent J. - Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis
Chauvin, Christine - MOST Ministries
Christian, Sarah - POBLO
Cieslak, Ron - Merritt Cieslak Design
Collins, Bruce - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
Dow, Roger - Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis
Dreyer, John M. - Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne
Evanson, Brian D. - Concordia Plan Services
Fumerola, Terry - Michigan District LERT
Gehm, David M. - Wellspring Lutheran Services
Goddard, Randall L. - Lutheran Men's Luncheon Club of Metro Detroit
Graham, Kathleen A. - Michigan District Archive
Haiser, Jill - Wellspring Lutheran Services
Hansard, Christie - Michigan District Parish Nurse Ministry
Heinz, Jacqueline - LAMP Ministry
Heinz, Walter F. - LAMP Ministry
Hokana, Mary - LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces
Hokana, Steven C. - LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces
Hughes, Debra R. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor
Iseler, Jo Anne - Lutherans For Life of Michigan
Kangas, Billy - Hope Clinic
Karkan, Betsy A. - Concordia University Chicago
Khan, Cynthia - POBLO
Kremkow, Gregory B. - Lutheran Hour Ministries
Kucenski, Danielle - Christian Bible Scholars
Kucenski, Peter - Christian Bible Scholars
L'Heureux, Tom - Chime Masters
Marcus, Joy - POBLO
Montez, Marcy - Franklin Avenue Mission
Muehlenbeck, Tammy - Connection by Design, Brighton
Mueller, Keith W. - Lutheran Benefits Group & Lutheran Trust
Murdock, Linda M - MOST Ministries
Nohelty, Jenny - Gift Planning Services, Eau Claire
Quill, Timothy C. J. - Siberian Lutheran Mission Society
Redford, Michael - Wellspring Lutheran Services
Saalfeld, James R. - Church Extension Fund, Ann Arbor
Schillack, Niklaus - Samaritas
Schmidt, Ralph G. - Orphan Grain Train
Schmitz, Reuben - Bethesda Lutheran Communities
Snyder, Paul - Concordia Plan Services
Sohn, O. Dennis - Michigan District Family Ministry
Storm, Walter W. - District Commission on Deacon Qualification
Sutherland, Bruce - Lutheran Hour Ministries
Taylor, Kurt S. - CUW - Dir of Church Ministries Program
Williams, Carol - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor

Congregations by Circuit and Region

North & East Region

Circuit # 1 Mackinaw Straits	Confirmed Members	Circuit #6 Bay City	Confirmed Members
Cheboygan, St. John	187	Bay City, Faith	1,094
DeTour Village, Redeemer	11	Bay City, Immanuel	1,037
Drummond Island, Drummond Island	100	Bay City (Amelith), St. John	418
Engadine, Bethlehem	122	Bay City (Frankenlust), St. Paul	761
Germfask, Grace	95	Bay City (Monitor), Trinity	599
Hawks (Rogers City), Faith	90	Bay City, Zion	951
Kinross, St. Paul	7	Essexville, Pilgrim	293
Newberry, Trinity	118	Pinconning, St. John	<u>365</u>
Onaway, Holy Cross	143	8 Member Congregations	5,518
Moltke (Rogers City), Immanuel	175		
Rogers City, Peace	358	Circuit #7 Thumb East	Confirmed Members
Rogers City, St. John	284	Bad Axe, Our Savior	537
Rogers City, St. Michael	251	Forestville (Minden City), Trinity	113
Sault Sainte Marie, St. Barnabas	60	Harbor Beach, Zion	482
Saint Ignace, Hope	<u>18</u>	Kinde, St. Peter	110
15 Member Congregations	2,019	Marlette, Our Savior	216
		Palms, St. John	74
Circuit # 2 Alpena-Gaylord	Confirmed Members	Port Hope, St. John	544
Alpena, Immanuel	1,215	Port Sanilac, St. John	54
Harrisville, Faith	17	Sandusky, Peace	<u>342</u>
Hillman, St. John	426	9 Member Congregations	2,472
Hubbard Lake, St. Paul	244		
Lewiston, Bethlehem	172	Circuit #8 Thumb West	Confirmed Members
Mio, Living Water	49	Caseville, Good Shepherd	90
Ossineke, Good Shepherd	60	Cass City, Good Shepherd	310
Posen, St. Paul	<u>17</u>	Fairgrove, Grace	146
8 Member Congregations	2,200	Kilmanagh (Sebewaing), St. John	184
		Linkville (Pigeon), St. Paul	372
Circuit #3 Timberline	Confirmed Members	Sebewaing, Immanuel	829
Au Gres, St. John	256	Bach (Sebewaing), St. Peter	75
Glennie, Our Savior	30	Unionville, St. Paul	<u>293</u>
Hale, St. Paul's	341	8 Member Congregations	2,299
Oscoda, Trinity	308		
Prescott, Faith	239	Circuit #9 Frankenmuth	Confirmed Members
Tawas City, Zion	306	Caro, St. Paul	628
Whittemore, Good News Ministries	<u>58</u>	Frankenmuth, St. Lorenz	3,908
7 Member Congregations	1,538	Millington, St. Paul	1,485
		Munger, Trinity-St. James	520
Circuit #4 Gladwin	Confirmed Members	Reese, Trinity	848
Clare, Prince Of Peace	61	Richville, St. Michael	1,109
Gladwin, Our Savior	730	Saginaw (Frankentrost), Immanuel	<u>491</u>
Harrison, St. Luke	168	7 Member Congregations	8,989
Houghton Lake, St. John	416		
St. Helen, Hope	103	Circuit #10 Saginaw	Confirmed Members
Standish, Bethlehem	178	Bridgeport, Faith	279
West Branch, St. John	<u>147</u>	Hemlock, St. Peter	1,077
7 Member Congregations	1,803	Hemlock, Zion	372
		Owosso, St. Philip	115
Circuit #5 Midland	Confirmed Members	Saginaw, Bethlehem	849
Alma, Peace	112	Saginaw, Good Shepherd	735
Auburn, Grace	299	Saginaw, Holy Cross	463
Auburn, Zion	806	Saginaw, Peace	1,587
Brant, St. John	104	Saginaw, St. Mark	465
Midland, Lord Of New Life	118	Saginaw (Carrolton), Messiah	176
Midland, Messiah	1,153	St. Charles, Nativity	<u>84</u>
Midland, Our Savior	78	11 Member Congregations	6,202
Midland, St. John's	965		
Mt. Pleasant, Zion	469	Circuit #11 Flint North	Confirmed Members
Sanford, St. Paul	342	Birch Run, St. Martin	512
Wheeler, Immanuel	<u>405</u>	Clio, Messiah	1,791
11 Member Congregations	4,851	Flint, Christ The King	31
		Flint, Our Savior	190
		Flint, St. Paul	675
		Flint, United In Christ	116
		Flushing, Holy Cross	<u>271</u>
		7 Member Congregations	3,586

Circuit #12 Flint South	Confirmed Members
Flint (Burton), Pilgrim	145
Fenton, Trinity	457
Flint, Lamb of God	173
Goodrich, Christ	118
Grand Blanc, Faith	1,319
Linden, Hope	289
Swartz Creek, NewLife Community	<u>174</u>
7 Member Congregations	2,675

Circuit #13 Lapeer	Confirmed Members
Davison, Trinity	582
Dryden, Holy Redeemer	196
Flint, St. Mark	624
Lapeer, St. Paul	1,060
North Branch, New Life In Christ	85
Otisville, St. Timothy	215
Imlay City, Family of Christ	<u>61</u>
7 Member Congregations	2,823

112 Member Congregations 46,975

Metro East Region

Circuit #14 Port Huron	Confirmed Members
Algonac, First	74
Armada, Our Saviour	191
Fair Haven, St. Peter	136
Goodells, Hope	18
Lexington, St. Matthew	564
Marine City, Living Faith	41
Marysville, Light of Christ	58
Memphis, St. Andrew	157
Port Huron, Faith	331
Port Huron, Trinity	870
Ray, Living Hope of the Bay	50
Richmond, St. Peter's	1,134
St. Clair, Immanuel	<u>597</u>
13 Member Congregations	4,221

Circuit #15 Macomb North	Confirmed Members
Chesterfield (New Baltimore), Good Shepherd	66
Clinton Twp., St. Luke	636
Clinton Twp., Trinity	2,150
Macomb, Immanuel	3,193
Macomb, St. Peter	3,096
New Baltimore, Christ	89
Ray Twp. (New Haven), St. John	<u>140</u>
7 Member Congregations	9,370

Circuit #16 Macomb NW	Confirmed Members
Romeo, Grace Fellowship	537
Shelby Twp. (Utica/Disco), Peace	400
Shelby Twp., Shepherd's Gate	834
Sterling Heights, Redemption	88
Sterling Heights, St. Paul	200
Troy, All Nations	69
Troy, Faith	2,778
Troy, Faith Tamil	58
Utica, Trinity	2,806
Washington, Our Redeemer	<u>369</u>
10 Member Congregations	8,139

Circuit #17 Oakland North	Confirmed Members
Clarkston, St. Trinity	321
Lake Orion, Good Shepherd	183
Ortonville, Prince Of Peace	68
Oxford, Holy Cross	135
Pontiac, St. Paul Community	55
Rochester, Incarnate Word	25
Rochester, Living Word	341
Rochester, St. John	1,856
Rochester Hills, Crown Of Life	98
Rochester Hills (Brooklands), Gethsemane	132
Waterford, St. Stephen	<u>476</u>
11 Member Congregations	3,690

Circuit #18 Birmingham	Confirmed Members
Birmingham, Redeemer	1,362
Birmingham, Our Savior Deaf	38
Birmingham, Our Shepherd	1,464
Bloomfield Hills, Cross Of Christ	418
Huntington Woods, Huntington Woods	398
Royal Oak, St. Paul	792
Troy, St. Augustine	218
Warren, Holy Cross	<u>312</u>
8 Member Congregations	5,002

Circuit #19 Macomb South	Confirmed Members
Eastpointe, St. Peter's	1,143
Eastpointe, St. Thomas	425
Fraser, St. John	954
Roseville, Bethlehem	243
Warren, Hope	846
Warren, Peace	161
Warren, Trinity	<u>69</u>
7 Member Congregations	3,841

Circuit #20 Detroit East	Confirmed Members
Detroit, Bethany	96
Detroit, Charity	60
Detroit, East Bethlehem	59
Detroit, Historic Trinity	990
Detroit, Mt. Calvary	114
Detroit, Peace	<u>108</u>
6 Member Congregations	1,427

62 Member Congregations 35,690

Metro West Region

Circuit #21 Detroit West	Confirmed Members	Circuit #28 Milan	Confirmed Members
Dearborn, Atonement	72	Ann Arbor, St. Thomas	62
Detroit, Evergreen	50	Belleville, Open Arms	178
Detroit, Iglesia Luterana Pan De Vida	45	Britton, Emmanuel	231
Detroit, Nazareth	38	Milan, St. Paul	225
Detroit, Outer Drive Faith	145	New Boston, St. Paul's	174
Detroit, Redford	57	Romulus, Tabernacle of Praise	12
Detroit, St. John	46	Saline, Christ Our King	487
Detroit, St. Philip	132	Ypsilanti, Faith	71
Detroit, St. Stephen	79	8 Member Congregations	<u>1,440</u>
Detroit, Faith	125		
Detroit, Family of God	40	Circuit #29 Ann Arbor	Confirmed Members
11 Member Congregations	<u>829</u>	Ann Arbor, Peace	281
		Ann Arbor, St. Luke	786
Circuit #23 Down River	Confirmed Members	Ann Arbor, St. Paul	836
Allen Park, Mt. Hope	99	Ann Arbor, University Lutheran Chapel	99
Flat Rock, Community	364	Chelsea, Our Savior	223
Lincoln Park, Calvary	250	Hamburg, St. Paul	494
Southgate, Christ The King	1,918	Pinckney, Trinity	119
Taylor, Our Redeemer	83	Whitmore Lake, Living Water	87
Taylor, St. John's	185	Ypsilanti, Cross & Resurrection	54
Trenton, St. Paul	1,003	9 Member Congregations	<u>2,892</u>
Wyandotte, Trinity	340		
8 Member Congregations	<u>4,242</u>	Circuit #30 Jackson	Confirmed Members
		Addison, Lutheran Church Of The Lakes	329
Circuit #24 Monroe	Confirmed Members	Adrian, Hope	176
Lambertville, Christ The King	151	Adrian, St. John's	579
Monroe, Grace	423	Adrian, St. Matthew's	104
Monroe, Holy Ghost	615	Blissfield, Blessed Savior	12
Monroe (Ida), Immanuel	343	Brooklyn (Irish Hills), St. Marks	140
Monroe, Trinity	1,036	Hudson, Our Saviour	67
New Boston (Waltz), St. John	920	Jackson, Redeemer	570
Newport, Christ Our Shepherd	77	Jackson, Trinity	802
Petersburg, St. Peter	180	9 Member Congregations	<u>2,779</u>
8 Member Congregations	<u>3,745</u>		
		76 Member Congregations	25,206
Circuit #25 Dearborn	Confirmed Members		
Dearborn, Emmanuel	320		
Dearborn, Guardian	1,005		
Dearborn, Our Redeemer	69		
Plymouth, Living Word	141		
Wayne, St. Michael	499		
Westland, Our Saviour	18		
Westland, St. Matthew	487		
7 Member Congregations	<u>2,539</u>		
Circuit #26 Kensington	Confirmed Members		
Brighton, Shepherd Of The Lakes	1,117		
Highland, Faith	462		
Milford, Christ	393		
South Lyon, Cross of Christ	292		
Walled Lake, St. Matthew	1,294		
Waterford (Union Lake/Pontiac), Peace	248		
West Bloomfield (Union Lake), St. Mark	109		
White Lake, Cedar Crest	34		
8 Member Congregations	<u>3,949</u>		
Circuit #27 Livonia	Confirmed Members		
Canton, Grace	65		
Dearborn Heights, Immanuel	38		
Farmington Hills, Prince Of Peace	180		
Farmington Hills, St. Paul's	310		
Livonia, Christ Our Savior	1,332		
Northville, St. Paul	450		
Redford, Hosanna-Tabor	224		
Westland, Salem National	105		
8 Member Congregations	<u>2,704</u>		

West Region

Circuit #31 Petoskey	Confirmed Members	Circuit #37 Tri-River	Confirmed Members
Bellaire, Hope	54	Belding, Holy Cross	73
Boyne City, Christ	368	Greenville, Mt. Calvary	171
Charlevoix, Bethany	57	Howard City, Bethel	133
Gaylord, Trinity	170	Ionia, St. John	71
Grayling, Mt. Hope	97	Lowell, Good Shepherd	80
Kalkaska, St. Paul	279	Sand Lake, Resurrection	122
Mancelona, St. Matthew	100	Stanton, Hope	36
Petoskey, Zion	<u>338</u>	7 Member Congregations	686
8 Member Congregations	1,463		
Circuit #32 Traverse City	Confirmed Members	Circuit #38 Muskegon	Confirmed Members
Benzonia, Our Savior	63	Conklin, Trinity	482
Cedar (Good Harbor), St. Paul	53	Montague, St. James	480
Elk Rapids, Grace	78	Muskegon, Our Redeemer	261
Glen Arbor, Bethlehem	74	Norton Shores (Muskegon), St. Mark	527
Interlochen, Redeemer	278	Muskegon, Trinity	391
Leland, Immanuel	192	Nunica, St. Luke	160
Traverse City, St. Michael & All Angels	199	Shelby, St. Stephen's	53
Traverse City, Trinity	<u>1,341</u>	Whitehall, Faith	<u>182</u>
8 Member Congregations	2,278	8 Member Congregations	2,536
Circuit #33 Manistee	Confirmed Members	Circuit #39 Holland	Confirmed Members
Arcadia, Trinity	243	Coopersville, Grace	289
Cadillac, Emmanuel	447	Grand Haven, St. John's	482
Ludington, Peace	27	Holland, Christ Our Savior	225
Ludington, St. John's	260	Holland, Zion	383
Manistee, Norwalk	65	Spring Lake, Lakeshore Fellowship	246
Manistee, Trinity	537	Spring Lake, St. Matthew	159
Mesick, Faith	21	West Olive, United	<u>161</u>
Onekama, Trinity	175	7 Member Congregations	1,945
Pentwater, Lighthouse	48		
Scottville, Our Savior	487	Circuit #40 Grand Rapids N Central	Confirmed Members
Wellston, Beautiful Savior	<u>11</u>	Grand Rapids, Immanuel	416
11 Member Congregations	2,321	Grand Rapids, Messiah	262
		Grand Rapids, Mt. Olive	79
		Grand Rapids, Our Savior	255
		Grand Rapids, St. James	429
		Ada (Grand Rapids), St. Matthew	528
		Rockford, St. Peter's	<u>177</u>
		7 Member Congregations	2,146
Circuit #34 Big Rapids	Confirmed Members	Circuit #41 Grand Rapids SW	Confirmed Members
Baldwin, Grace	47	Byron Center, Journey of Faith	56
Big Rapids, St. Peter's	597	Caledonia, St. Paul	664
Fremont, Redeemer	104	Grandville, Bethel	61
Mecosta, Chapel Of The Lakes	206	Hudsonville, New Hope	148
Reed City, Trinity	400	Jenison, Holy Cross	1,356
White Cloud, Christ	<u>129</u>	Jenison (Allendale), St. John	149
6 Member Congregations	1,483	Kentwood, St. Mark	291
		Middleville, Good Shepherd	<u>43</u>
		8 Member Congregations	2,768
Circuit #35 Capitol	Confirmed Members	Circuit #42 Battle Creek	Confirmed Members
Charlotte, First	429	Albion, St. Paul	236
Holt, Messiah	261	Battle Creek, Redemption	234
Holt, St. Matthew	190	Battle Creek, St. Mark	467
Howell, Heart of the Shepherd	437	Battle Creek, St. Paul	157
Lansing, Good Shepherd	134	Kalamazoo, Immanuel	188
Lansing, Living Word	16	Kalamazoo, Zion	592
Lansing, Our Savior	885	Marshall, Christ	179
Lansing, Trinity	95	Paw Paw, Trinity	650
Leslie, Grace	<u>93</u>	Portage, St. Michael	621
9 Member Congregations	2,540	Three Rivers, St. Peter	<u>129</u>
		10 Member Congregations	3,453
Circuit #36 St. Johns	Confirmed Members		
Carson City, Calvary	68		
DeWitt, Hope	164		
East Lansing, Ascension	140		
Fowler, St. Paul	107		
Haslett, St. Luke	673		
Portland, St. Andrew	208		
St. Johns, St. John	313		
St. Johns (Riley), St. Peter	<u>381</u>		
8 Member Congregations	2,054		

Advisory Delegates to the 2019 Synodical Convention

Ministers of Religion – Ordained

Delegates

Rev. Gerald E. Grimm
Rev. Dr. Theodore J. Hopkins
Rev. Charles R. Schulz

Alternate

Rev. Dr. Dale M. Kleimola
Rev. Frederick A. Schmitt

Ministers of Religion – Commissioned

Delegates

Dr. Barbara J. Laughlin-Adler
Mr. Levi R. Bringold
Mrs. Samantha M. Brown
Mrs. Kelley J. Fehn
Mrs. Kathryn J. Hartfield
Mrs. Susan L. Hooper
Mrs. Amanda R. Jones
Mr. Jack J. Lustila
Mrs. Kathryn L. Pearson
Mr. Eric D. Steinke
Mr. Paul O. Weismantel
Mr. John A. Welte
Mrs. Amy J. Weston
Mr. Charles A. Winterstein

Alternates



President's Address 2018 Michigan District Convention



Greetings to Pres. Harrison, Vice Pres. John Wohlrahe, Dr. John Vieker – President's Office, Brothers in the Holy Ministry, Teachers, DCEs, Directors of Family Life, Worship Art Leaders, Laity – ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Grace, mercy, and peace be yours again this morning from our all-loving, all-merciful God!

P: The Lord is risen!

C: He is risen INDEED!! ALLELUIA!!!

What a difference a day makes! How blessed to be People of Hope because of Jesus' resurrection from the dead and know the difference our sin-conquering, grave-emptying, heaven-opening Savior can and does make in our lives and in all who believe in Him.

What a joy to embrace an ever-present Savior God who promises never to leave or forsake us. Because of Jesus, we are not afraid or even worried, having come to realize that, even during this age of continuing and constant change and turmoil, there are wondrous and NEW opportunities to LIVE AS GOD'S SAVED AND SENT SERVANTS!

Why? Because God says ... *"you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light"* (1 Peter 2:9). We are all priests! ... and daily can declare and share our praise and worship to the only God that is worthy!

And, if you are a pastor, you have been called into the Office of the Holy Ministry of our Lord. The Apostle Paul's words spoken at Miletus to the Elders/pastors from Ephesus direct us: *"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood"* (Acts 20:28).

Let us also heed the great Apostle's Holy Spirit inspired instructions in Ephesians 4 and continue ... *"to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."* New Testament Gospel Ministry is about releasing and equipping God's people. It's about releasing God's people ...

- from sin's guilt;
- from sin's shame;
- from sin's destruction;
- from sin's control;
- from fear;
- from addiction;
- from Satan's lies.

It's about equipping God's people ...

- FOR worship of the Triune God;
- FOR service in God's Kingdom;
- FOR transforming God's broken creation;
- FOR joining with God on His mission;
- FOR creative expression as God's Image-bearers;
- FOR "Living As God's Saved and Sent Servants."

I don't know about you, but one thing I will NEVER be used to are senseless school shootings. Did you know that an analysis of gun-related deaths among children shows that more kids in the U.S. have been killed by gunfire since the December, 2014, Sandy Hook massacre than U.S. soldiers killed overseas since 9/11? Though the exact figure is unclear, it rivals the tally of U.S. military deaths overseas—in 11 fewer years. The Department of Defense report accounts for total deaths in the five military operations since the war on terror began following the September 11, 2001 attack. (<http://www.newsweek.com/gun-violence-children-killed-sandy-hook-military-soldiers-war-terror-911-848602>)

Now, if any of our children—God forbid—were the ones who had been killed ... how angry, hurt, empty, would all of us be? I'm sorry. I know that is a terrible thought. Yet, by God's grace given in Baptism or the Word of God, we would have the sure and certain hope that our murdered children would immediately be in the arms of our loving Savior. Thank God for a resurrected Savior and an eternity in His presence.

BUT here's the question: How horrified ... overwhelmed ... outraged ... completely disturbed and distraught are we that our neighbors, relatives, fellow workers, family, friends, and acquaintances ... do NOT know Jesus as Savior ... and are going to hell?

Let's wake up! Friends, WE ARE INVOLVED IN A WAR! It's a war between light and darkness, good and evil, being waged over the souls of men ... AND we are smack dab in the middle of it!

I honestly think this war between heaven and hell is the picture Jesus was describing when responding to Peter after his great confession: *"And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"* (Matthew 16:18).

The Church—God's believing people—is stationed on the front lines right next to the gates of hell. It's not afraid to pound on its doors with the Gospel, because if you don't believe in Jesus ... hell is where you reside. You may be alive, but you are dead apart from Jesus. But the *"sword of the Spirit,"* the "Word of God", is powerful, indeed *"the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes!"* ...

and is one of the weapons that has divine power to demolish strongholds – like unbelief (2 Corinthians 10:4).

HOW, THEN, WE SHOULD DAILY CONSIDER ...
WHAT OUR LOVING AND ALMIGHTY GOD

- the God of Christmas—Who is God with us;
- the God of Good Friday—Who is God for us;
- the God of Easter—Who is God in us because of our Baptisms; and
- the God of Pentecost—Who is God through us to the world ...

... STILL WANTS TO DO IN, THROUGH, AND BY
OUR REDEEMED, SANCTIFIED, AND EMPOWERED
LIVES and WITNESS!

What God desires ... Martin Luther pointedly enunciates and challenges in a sermon on 1 Peter 2:9. He makes it abundantly clear that the Christian lives for the sake of proclamation – the sharing – of the Good News, the Gospel. 1 Peter 2:9 states, “*You should proclaim the deeds of the One who called you from the darkness into his wonderful light!*” And here’s Luther’s commentary:

We live on earth only so that we should be a help to other people. Otherwise, it would be best if God would strangle us and let us die as soon as we were baptized and had begun to believe. For this reason, however, he lets us live that we may bring other people also to faith as He has done for us ...

This is part of being a priest, being God’s messenger and having his command to proclaim his Word.
[Predigten über den 1. Petrusbrief. 1. Bearbeitung (Sermons on 1 Peter, first edition) 1523 WA 12:267.3–7, 318.25–319.6 Stolle, Volker. The Church Comes from All Nations (Kindle Locations 234-250). Concordia Publishing House. Kindle Edition.]

Luther understood and embraced God’s heart for the lost and His intent for His Church and its individual members.

Remember that Jesus, in His first sermon – the Sermon on the Mount – not only references the dramatic influence a Christian has in the world, but recognizes a Christian’s witness as part of the “DNA” of every child of God. He says in Matthew 5:13–16: “*You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.*”

“*You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*”

I find it almost impossible to separate the themes of salt and light. These two designations work beautifully together:

- salt – refers to the silent, often invisible influence of God in the world through His children; and

- light – refers to the revealing work of God in the world through our presence and witness.

SALT

These verses in *Matthew 5*, following immediately after the Beatitudes, describe and emphasize the Christian’s influence in society as “salt.” A Christian that is *merciful*, or *mEEK*, or a *peacemaker*, or *pure in heart*, will have a tremendous influence in the lives of those who live around them and who come into contact with them.

Salt, a highly prized mineral, gathered in Palestine along the Mediterranean seashore, had numerous qualities, many of which we can easily understand:

- Salt makes you THIRSTY. Thirst is God’s way of letting you know you need something: water. Through your Gospel life and witness, people will come to recognize they need something: Jesus, the Living Water, the Water of Life.

- Salt is also good for SEASONING food, enhancing its flavor. Who likes to eat food without salt? Even though salt is small and hardly noticeable, it makes a big difference when used.

- Salt is a PRESERVATIVE. It allowed food to last longer without having refrigeration systems like we do today. And interestingly,

- Salt demonstrated FRIENDSHIP. Salt was seen as a covenant relationship. In *Numbers 18:19*, Moses wrote, “*It is an everlasting covenant of salt before the LORD for both you and your offspring.*” So salt also represented a relationship. In fact, there is an Arab saying, “There is salt—*friendship*—between us.”

“*You are the Salt of the Earth.*” Jesus is referring to the silent witness and influence of the believing child of God in society. It is the influence that you have on other people’s lives making them better, preserving them for the opportunity of eternal life.

Friends,

- We ignore God’s design and deny our salt function when we fail to mingle with all people, but especially the lost, least, last, lonely, limited, and “lame;”

- We ignore God’s design and deny our salt function when we don’t make time to create space for conversation;

- We ignore God’s design and deny our salt function when we fail to be kind, merciful, and the peacemaker.

We are not to draw away from society. Although we are not of the world, by God’s design and will we are profoundly and purposefully IN the world. If we, as salt, aren’t present in and influencing the world around us—especially those who are perishing—who will?

When we “live” the salt function, we are partnering with God helping to create the possibility of which the Apostle Peter speaks in 2 Peter 3: “*The Lord is not slow in keeping his*

promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance."

- Your being salt is about deliberately considering, creating and developing ways to be in relationship with people.
- Your being salt is about demonstrating true friendship, showing the love and friendship of Jesus.
- Your being salt is about praying for and discovering "spiritual wedges" that can be leveraged to create space for "the" conversation about Jesus. Listen, and contemplate, meditate, upon these Scriptures:

1 John 3:17: But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?

1 John 3:18: Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

Romans 10:14: How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?

Love is the main ingredient in true friendship. And ... when did God show His love for us? "*God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us*" (Romans 5:8).

When should we show this love? Here's a truth worth remembering:

The best use of life is love.

The best expression of love is time.

The best time to love is NOW.

To what extent do we show love? The words of our Lord in John 15 are both encouraging and directive: "*I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.*"

That's salt! That's what it means to love the lost, least, last, lonely, limited, and "lame" —even our enemies!

What about LIGHT?

Light has been a symbol of divine presence and work from creation on. "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it*" (John 1:1–5).

Jesus also said, "*I Am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life*" (John 8:12). We rejoice with the Psalmist when he sings: "*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*" (Psalm 27:1).

Brothers and sisters in Christ, in our best moments we are

reflectors of the Light. Moreover, the light emanating from us is also "Christ in us" through our baptismal union with Him (Romans 6). There is a reflected light and there is an inherent, "residential" light because Christ lives in us.

Listen to Paul in Galatians 2:20: "*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*" In Colossians 1:27, Paul makes it clear that God chose to make known among the Gentiles "*the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*"

LIGHT has some unique functions.

- Light Exposes darkness: Darkness is expelled as soon as you hit the lights. People are not aware of the darkness they live in if they don't see the light. "*The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light*" (Matthew 4:16). The question is, "Does my life help anyone see more clearly?"

- Light serves as a guide. Airports help planes see the runway by the lights on the side of the runway. When we try to drive in the dark or land in the dark, without lights, it is disastrous! We are guides to people who are in darkness.

- Light shines. If you will, there is no such thing as a secret Christian. We need to shine at all times. Our light shines inevitably so that people will see the works of God in our life and be attracted to Jesus Christ.

- Light is NOT meant to be hidden. Jesus said, "*A city on a hill cannot be hidden.*"

Here's the deal! Jesus says: <i>YOU are the Light of the world! SHINE!</i>
--

We are to dispel darkness, and show the way. Listen to this Old Testament prophecy regarding God's Old Testament people, Israel: "*Arise; shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising*" (Isaiah 60:1–3).

NOW, "in Christ", "*You are the light of the world.*" Our family, friends, relatives, neighbors, congregations, and communities ...

- wherever WE are ...
- wherever we need to be ...
- wherever God will send us ...

ARE TO SEE, and COME TO HEAR ABOUT, JESUS in our lives. Every Christian is a light to help others find salvation which is—and how the world HATES these words—ONLY, EXCLUSIVELY "*in Christ.*" "*... God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

As we continue to grow and mature in the faith ... *we, who*

with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). We can grow brighter and brighter.

Friends, in order to reflect the light, or shine the light of Jesus in us ... we need to spend more time in the Light, AND with the Light. We do this by reading and studying God's Holy Word, meditating on it, memorizing it, praying it ... AND BEING DISCIPLINED ABOUT DOING THAT. Consider how similar "discipline" and "disciple" are. A disciple of the Lord is disciplined about maintaining time with the Lord—being in His Word and praying.

Is there a difference between Christians and disciples? I was often asked that in my confirmation classes. Although, I always had my pat answer, it wasn't until this past March that I heard the best answer to that question: "Christians go to heaven; disciples change the world ... before they do."

God forgive us our biblical illiteracy. I am asking this assembly to give special attention to Resolution 1-07, To Encourage Reading of the Bible! As DISCIPLES ... may we do so knowing that His light will shine in us and through us; ... and people will see the beauty of God.

Here's something of a summary: God has put the light in three places:

1. In Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said, "*I am the light of the world*" (John 8:12).

2. In His Word, the Scriptures. Psalm 119:105 says, "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path;*" and verse 130, "*The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.*"

As the Scriptures are learned and shared, the Word of God convicts people of their sinful condition, their need of Jesus, and their salvation and strength in Jesus. They are illumined. As the Psalmist says, "*For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light*" (Psalm 36:9).

3. The third place God has deposited His light is in YOU: "*You are the light of the world.*" As Christian people live out their lives for the Lord in close proximity to lost people, God can turn the light on so they see their need for Jesus.

Let me share a quick story out of St. John, Ludington, that illustrates this. The church was reluctant to change and locate their VBS to it's pastors cul-de-sac. One day of each week of last summer, they set up a water slide. The children in the community played, had pizza, and did crafts. Of course, part of their time included a dinner prayer, and a lesson from the Bible. Even firemen and other community groups pitched in to make it a success.

Two boys attended regularly and learned of Jesus and faith. Their father was skeptical about this VBS being free, thinking for sure the church wanted something in return. Several months later, the church received a letter—much of

which I am sharing with you now—detailing how the boys loved their time at this VBS that summer. The letter also explained that a tragic automobile accident had happened, and that, while trapped inside the car, one of the boys said to his Mom, "We should pray." He continued with the only prayer he knew, the one learned that summer, which they affectionately called the "pizza prayer."

It turns out he was severely injured, and that his last words to his still skeptical father were, "Daddy, Jesus isn't imaginary." The young boy died, but his father recounts that, instead of the church wanting something from them, they received the best gift ever—knowing their son had faith in Jesus as Savior.

Mother Theresa once said, "Don't try to do great things for God; do little things with great love."

Friends, there are people on this planet—the lost, least, last, lonely, limited, and "lame" —whom only you know ... that only you can love and will be able to reach, because of where you live and who God has made you to be. That's true of every member in your congregation, that's true of every Christian. If just one person will be in heaven because of God's light in you, your life will have made an eternal difference.

I want to especially say to those members of the "*holy priesthood*" here this morning who are laity—who are not otherwise professional church workers: your personal story, your "testimony" —your "God story," as the psalmist writes (*Psalm 26:7*) —is often times more effective than a sermon. Unbelievers sometimes see pastors as professional salesmen; but, they see you as a "satisfied customer." Often times, they not only give you the benefit of a "hearing," but will look at you as a more credible resource. Indeed, "*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect ...*" (1 Peter 3:15). Always be prepared to sow the seed of His Word in God-prepared, good soil.

God has never made a person He didn't love. We too, then, must care about—and love—all people, all unbelievers. The Apostle Peter reminds us "*He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9). This is why as a Church we want to share the Word and, by the Holy Spirit's power, see God's Kingdom grow. God has promised,

"... so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

God's Word is powerful, effective, and breaks through the hardened, sin-encrusted heart to create faith. Have you ever considered that it is Satan – his direct attack – that keeps

you from being in the Word? Christians who do not want to grow and mature in their faith, who do not want to see their congregations grow by reaching the people around them of every nation and tribe with Christ and His Word, are literally saying to the world, “You can go to hell.”

- For those who don’t think we should discover ways to share the Good News but rather wait for society to “come around” and be friendlier to the Church and her message, **YOU’RE WRONG!**

- For those who say that only ordained pastors should tell others about the Gospel because that’s the only time the Gospel is efficacious, **YOU’RE WRONG!**

- For those who give in to demographic studies that say every church body is shrinking ... and then, maybe, allow that as an excuse NOT to find ways to be “salt” and “light” wherever God has planted us ... **AND NOT** just among those who look like us ... **GOD FORGIVE US!**

The question for ALL of us is, and will be, “Is there anyone that knows Jesus has given them life because of you?” Will anyone in heaven be able to say, “I want to thank you. I’m here because you cared enough to talk with me, to be my friend, to share the Good News with me?” Imagine greeting people in heaven whom, through God’s working, you helped get there.

There are some old sayings: “You can’t take it with you,” or “You’ve never seen a hearse pulling a U-Haul.” Although there is a great deal of truth in those statements, they are not entirely true. You will be joined in heaven by those who received salvation by the power of the Holy Spirit through you sharing the Gospel. In this way ... you will take some with you to eternity.

Let me be clear: we are not responsible for changing people’s minds about God. That’s His work!! But we are ridiculously responsible for trying to change their minds about the Church!

“**BOLDNESS**” in Acts

In the Book of the Acts of the Apostles ... something that I think could be named “The Acts of God,” we find the word “boldness,” “confidence” (παρρησίαν—Greek *parresia*—*par-rhay-see’-ah*) used five different times to describe the witness—the testimony, the sharing, the pointing to Jesus—by the apostles and by the members of the early Church. I am grateful for these insights on “boldness” shared by Dr. Dean Nadasdy with the Council of Presidents.

The *Book of Acts* is framed by the word “boldness.”

At the beginning, in Peter’s Pentecost sermon in *Acts* 2:29–30, he speaks with “confidence” or boldness as he shows how *Psalm 116* is all about Jesus. “Brethren, I may confidently (παρρησίαν) say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this

day. “And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that **GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE, ...**”

At the other end of *Acts*, in 28:30–31, Luke gives his summary of Paul’s last years in Rome: “He ... welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness (μετὰ πάσης παρρησίας) and without hindrance.”

The other three appearances of “boldness” in Acts all show up in chapter 4. Peter and John had been teaching in the temple. They had healed a disabled man in the name of Jesus. Now they stand before the very same Sanhedrin which had tried Jesus. Peter tells them that the man was healed by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, “whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead (v.10).” Then he references *Psalm 118*, identifying Jesus as the rejected stone that has now become the cornerstone. Just as this man was healed by the name of Jesus, he says, so it is also **ONLY** by that name by which anyone is saved for eternity.

Then at vs. 13, we have Luke’s commentary. He writes: “Now when they saw the boldness / confidence (παρρησίαν) of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.”

Luke has us look at the apostles’ boldness from the Sanhedrin’s rational, somewhat secular, perspective. But that perspective was one of being amazed at the boldness, biblical knowledge, and wisdom—theological application—of these common, untrained men who knew JESUS and the Scriptures. They had a new way of understanding the Scriptures because Jesus had taught them to see Him—Christ, the Messiah—in the Scriptures. What’s more, the Sandhedrin, recognized these Galilean hicks as those who had followed and been with Jesus ... and now stood before them as HIS witnesses.

Then, near the end of *chapter 4*, Peter and John have returned from a night in jail and their time with Sanhedrin. In these verses we see the church at Jerusalem using the God-given, God-encouraged—often neglected—gift of PRAYER. Although, you’ve heard me use this quote, please listen again: “Probably the number one reason prayer malfunctions in the hands of believers is that we try to turn a wartime walkie-talkie into a domestic intercom. Until you know that life is war, you cannot know what prayer is for.” (John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*)

Here’s what they’re praying according to *Acts* 4:29–30: “And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness (παρρησίας), while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

And then, almost immediately, we see the answer to that prayer as Luke writes,³¹ “And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and

they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness (παρρησίας)."

So ... "boldness", "confidence", is surely an amazing "kind" of speech!

- But, it is surely something more than JUST dynamic speaking skills—you know, the guys who can read out of the phone book and make it seem inspirational ... and then takes an offering. Or, this is the preacher who writes in the margin of his manuscript, "Unsure of this point. Pound pulpit really hard."

From what I read, the apostle Paul's rhetorical skills were not all that great. The church at Corinth was not impressed.

- And it must be more than just human courage in the face of opposition. Most speakers—indeed, most pastors I know—struggle with fear. I still do. When I began this message this morning, I was afraid.

I believe the boldness the Sanhedrin saw in Peter and John, and the boldness Luke saw in the preaching of Paul, and the boldness the church in Jerusalem prayed with, and for, AND received – this New Testament ability to share Jesus ... was more than a mustering of mere human courage.

The boldness of the New Testament witness to Jesus Christ, I believe, was a combination of three things:

First, it was the MESSAGE itself, God's, inspired Word. Wherever you see the word "*boldness*" in the *Book of Acts*, if you look closely, it is never far from the mention of God's Word. So when Peter preaches and testifies, he's engaging the Word; in fact, He's quoting *Psalms 116* or *Psalms 118*. They had complete confidence in the Word because of what they had seen and come to know. The Word of the Lord not only grew the church in numbers but in "boldness," "boldness" in the Word which cannot be silenced, changed, or compromised.

Second, this boldness was the MESSENGER himself or herself – knowing, living in the absolute confidence of the message and the Person proclaimed.

- We don't just share truth, or just talk about what we are against.
- We don't just proclaim from the inspired, written Word.
- We preach the Word made flesh! We know and share and rely on a Person: Christ crucified, Christ risen, Christ ruling over all things. Christ returning; and, the virtues of Christ, the merits of Christ, the teachings of Christ, the victory of Christ. Because Jesus is at the heart of our message, we are bold.

Those first witnesses had seen the risen Jesus with their own eyes! They had been with Jesus, and people knew it. We may not see Jesus with our own eyes, but we have been with Him—and He with us—in prayer, in study, in baptism, in the Supper. We know Him. We talk with Him. We love Him, and that relationship with Christ is personal, deep, strong, growing, rich, and hope-filled. That makes us bold ... like we have just come from being with Jesus.

The third aspect of boldness in sharing our witness is the PROMISED presence, power, and work of the Holy Spirit. You see it in these passages from Acts. You may not always recognize Him but He is there. The Holy Spirit's work is often unseen, but you see the results. How often have we pastors preached a C+ sermon and someone comes up a few months later and says, "That sermon changed my life."

This New Testament boldness was a boldness that had to be dealt with, attacked, shut down, or believed as true ... BUT, it could not be ignored! It came from ordinary people who not only brought the message, but actually believed it. For ANY who worry that their witness is NOT PERFECT, use the Word, point to Jesus, and let the Holy Spirit do His work.

- The Holy Spirit within each of us is growing us as witnesses.
- The Holy Spirit outside of us is making things happen through the Word beyond our asking or imagining.

This is the "boldness" in these five passages from *Acts*,

- the boldness of a message rooted in the Word,
- the boldness of the messenger centered in the person of Christ, and
- BOLDNESS because the Holy Spirit of God is present.

It is, as it has always been – the message is inseparable from the messenger, and Jesus and the Holy Spirit are always present. Children of the King of kings, and Lord of Lords ...

- because of the Word of God;
- because of Jesus with you, for you, in you, and through you;
- because of the power of the Holy Spirit;

LIVE BOLDLY AS GOD'S SAVED AND SENT SERVANTS!

Through God's power in the Word and the Sacraments **BECOME WHAT YOU ARE**. Shine! Be salt! Don't hinder or quench the Spirit! To take a phrase from Home Depot: Let's Do This!

Final words before hoisting the sails and letting the Holy Spirit—the WIND of God—fill them:

The Coast Guard Motto is *Semper Paratus*— "Always Prepared." From our perspective: *Always be prepared to give an answer for the hope that is within you.*

However, the motto of the Coast Guard Rescue Swimmers – the guys that jump into the raging ocean to help others in sinking boats – is, "SO OTHERS MAY LIVE." One Coast Guard swim trainer says that means, "*We have to go out; We don't have to come back!*"

We have to go out! ... BUT, IN CHRIST, we will come back ... and live with Him forever!

The Book of the Acts of God ... CONTINUES!

In Jesus' name, Amen. s.D.g.

Isaiah 12:4: "In that day you will say: 'Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.'"



2018 Michigan District Convention Essayist

Gospel DNA Five Markers of a Flourishing Church

Rev. Michael W. Newman
Texas District President

It is a joy to be with you. Greetings from Texas. The Texas district and president Ken Innings. He's still in the saddle. We're going to do some transition work and I'll officially start on September 1. But he sends his greetings. It is a joy to be with you. President Harrison, and colleagues as well. One of my seminary professors, Dr. John Wohlrabe, is here too. Classmate, John Vicker, great to be with you. President Maier. You know, I've known President Maier, we've known each other since we were young, wet-behind-the-ears pastors in the Chicago area, and God has continued to weave us together. I had a couple of his kids at Camp Arcadia for confirmation camp and it's been beautiful to see their family. And it's been wonderful and a great blessing to see his leadership in the Texas district and in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. What just a blessing to the church, we praise God, and it's nice to be here. Thanks for the invitation, President Maier. I appreciate being here. And of course, Michigan friends from Camp Arcadia, from all the places we met, from Concordia Ann Arbor, nice to be with you. It is such a pleasure.

As I said it was a spiritual battle getting here. The spiritual warfare was crazy. So, we ended up standing in a line at our hotel just a little after four in the morning, and the guy in front of us, had a wake-up call at 5:30. Can you believe that? Crazy. So, I got a few more hours of sleep than he did. But, God is good and he brought us here. But, the spiritual battle rages and we see it in so many different ways. In fact, you see it, I see it when it comes to the church. These are days when we worry about the church. They're days when we worry about new generations, Christianity in America. We worry about our own Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as we see decline and aging. We wonder what's going on and we pray, "Lord should we do".

There's a spiritual battle that's going on. That's one of the reasons why this book, Gospel DNA, came to be. My District President, President Ken Hennings, as I served in missions asked my colleagues and I to catalyze a movement of the Gospel in Texas. And so, in order to do that I started to do some homework and study, and I thought in our nation we see a decline. We see generations leaving the church.

We see church attendance going down. We see the church not favorably viewed by the culture anymore. So, how in the world can we catalyze a mission movement? A Gospel movement in Texas? And that got me looking at Gospel movements around the world. Do you know what's going on around the world even in the Lutheran church? The Lutheran church in Ethiopia is growing by leaps and bounds. Tanzania, in South America and Brazil, in Asia. All over the world, the Christian church is growing. So, I started studying those movements of the Gospel. And as I studied them more and more, I realized something sounded familiar. As I heard the stories and saw the accounts I realized that similar things were happening in our own church, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

And so, I started digging into our own history, my recollections, talking to people, looking at statistics. And pretty soon I saw that instead of borrowing from movements around the world and trying to find transferable principles from other cultures; instead of copying other church bodies, God has given us a treasure in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He has woven together Gospel DNA for this unique Western American context that we're in and you and I can learn from it. You and I can reconnect with the identity God has given us. So, this book and this talk today is not a trip down memory lane. It's not trying to be nostalgic about what we once were and can we go back to the 1950's or the late 1800's.

This is a conversation about identity, who God has made us, and remembering and reconnecting with the gift he has given us, and walking in that gift. And of course, that gift starts with the Scriptures. You remember Jesus' words to the church in Ephesus. We're going to zip through some of these. The district has these slides. They can share them. You have the book as well. But remember, Jesus spoke to the church in Ephesus, and the second slide really has it. If you take a look about half way down, Jesus says, "You've abandoned the love you had at first, remember therefore, remember from where you have fallen, repent, and do the works you did at first." "Remember what the gift I've given," Jesus says. And then, Isaiah 51. I love this

verse. This is the Old Testament lesson for New Year's Eve typically in the pericopes. "Listen to me," the prophet says. "You who pursue righteousness, who seek the Lord. Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug." Remember who you are, folks. Remember who you are in the presence of the redeemed God of grace. Remember. That's what this is. Let's remember who we are.

Now I just want to read to you a little passage from the book. We need to remember these days. We need to remember. This is what Janet Crouch said in an article called Loneliness of American Society. She said, "The secular humanist view that human existence is disconnected from any higher power and from responsibility for anyone other than ourselves gives a certain freedom to make one's own rules, but there is a price to pay for this freedom. Gone is human dignity. Gone is mankind's special connection to the Author" —capitalize Author—"of beauty, truth, or goodness. Ultimately we are free, but autonomy is just another way of being alone. Autonomous individuals have no responsibility to others just as others have no claim on them. There's no obligation to care about other's troubles or even to listen when someone intrudes into another's priceless personal space in search of a sympathetic hearing of their concerns and difficulties."

And then, I ask this question. We need to ask ourselves, have we as the church, as followers of Jesus, absorbed the secular, humanist point of view about human existence so completely that our drive for personal autonomy is overriding God's calling to care about people? What I want to do today is talk about five DNA markers that God has placed, given as gifts to us, our church, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. And five myths I've heard over the course of my 30-plus years of ministry, started from the very beginning, and my prayer is that you will reconnect with the gifts God has given, and be activated in those gifts as his church, uniquely crafted to be the identity he's given us here and now today for this generation.

This book you have, Gospel DNA, is divided up into sections and every fifth chapter is a how-to chapter. You can work through this book individually or with your church to see now what steps can we take. What can we do to be who God has made us to be? To remember to look to the rock from which we were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug. And I'm very excited because this is Michigan, the Michigan District. Oh, how'd that get in there? Oh. I was really eagerly waiting that color vote. You know blue and white was totally unexpected. Yeah. I knew I'd hear a little bit of that. It's probably the cat lovers too, sorry. Yeah.

But, as President Maier said, I graduated from this illustrious university. Not the one that stands in the shadow of Concordia Ann Arbor. And in fact, my wife and I met

on this campus. I proposed to her just across the river. We were married in the chapel. That's me, I look like Magnum in the 80's. My wife hasn't changed a bit though. She is just ever as beautiful and youthful. But, we met, got married a week after graduation here. My wife actually was a page at Michigan district conventions when she was a little girl and she picked up all of the votes before all of the technology, counted them all, right here in this gym. And I asked her, "How do they set up the gym for a district convention?" She said, "Well this is what they used to do when I was a kid". And this is it, this is the way. Some things just don't change. But, there's air conditioning now. There wasn't air conditioning before. So, it's great. Her father actually served on staff here, for almost 20 years, before he became President of Concordia Chicago, Dr. Eugene Prince.

So, we are deeply rooted in Michigan, in Concordia, Ann Arbor. In this place. We've taken our kids on vacation every year of their lives to a little place in Harrison, Michigan. That was the setting of my first couple of books. I've been teaching at Camp Arcadia for over 20 years and Cindy's been going to Camp Arcadia for I won't tell you how many more years. 'Cause she's very young, much younger than me. But, this is Michigan. This is the Michigan District. This is the place that brought the unique foundational identity of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to life. Your stories are a remarkable foundational story for our church body. It is so important for you, if anybody remembers, it's important for you to remember the rock from which you were hewn, the quarry from which you were dug. So, that you can reactivate and continue to step into this Gospel DNA and lead the way for our church body and for the church of Jesus Christ in this nation that is moving away from Christ. You have the treasure. You have the gift. It's true.

In fact, that's why the Missouri Synod started districts in the first place. This is from the 1950 LCMS convention proceedings. The President, President John Bankins', report. He said, "It was in order to discharge its missionary obligations more effectively that Synod resolved in 1853 to divide itself into four synodical Districts. Each District was to have its own Mission Board which would serve the opportunities within its own boundaries. With the passing years the multiplying mission doors have made it necessary for Synod to divide itself into additional Districts." The purpose of districts is not bureaucracy. It's not to spend money. It's not to make things complicated. It is for the mission of God to be able to reach uniquely into your context and places with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That's why you exist and that's why you're here today.

I want to tell you a little bit about your stories. I don't know if you know all the stories. There's so many of them. I have a bunch of them here in this book. This story of Dr. Ernst Gustav Herman Miessler is not in the book, but it is a profound story of the Michigan district. He was sent over

here to Michigan in 1851 to reach the Native Americans, that active mission that was happening here. Why did he come over here? Why did he leave his family? Why did he live in primitive accommodations in the woods, endure the biting cold of snowy winters, see his wife die in child birth as she gave birth there at the mission, far from any medical help. Why did he do that? Why did he travel 80 miles round trip in a canoe when the weather was warm and he admits he was a terrible canoeist and he actually almost lost his life several times, and with a sleigh and horse during the winter, and fall through the ice several times, almost lose his life, then be rescued by lumberjacks. It wore him down.

Why did he do this? Why did Friedrich Conrad Dietrich Wyneken come to install Rev. Miessler, Missionary Miessler. And when he got there he, on the spot, preached in English and translated the installation right into English. So, a translator could speak it in the Chippewa language to the people present so they could understand and grasp the word of God and what was going on. Why did they do that? Go to those great lengths of sacrifice and adaptability and love? This is why. He said because, “the people there were living in darkness in the shadow of death, knowing nothing of the Savior who suffered and died for them, too, and thus saved them from their sins.” He cared. He cared about these people for whom Jesus died. And so, he said, “The Christian’s duty to help in bringing the joyous message of Christ and His salvation to these poor benighted souls.” That’s what motivated that man to sacrifice so much in this state, in this district. Is the Gospel, the Gospel DNA. He cared.

And I don’t know if he’s a relative, but he was a 27-year-old missionary also working in Michigan to reach those who didn’t know the Gospel. As he sailed with a missionary companion on Saginaw Bay to get to his place of preaching, a storm came up; it broke the mast of the ship. The mast fell and crushed his skull, killing him. The ruined boat drowned his missionary partner. Their bodies washed up on the shore. The Native Americans found their missionaries who died so that they could know Jesus. That’s the kind of sacrifice. That’s the kind of legacy you have here in the Michigan district.

Another missionary, later in the 1900’s, Carl Geisler, was planting churches here on the state and one was a very difficult one in Hamtramck, as industry started the apex here in Michigan. And he said this, “But when has a missionary done enough for a lost soul?” Do you hear that passion? Do you hear that heart and attitude? These are the shoulders upon which you stand. This is the legacy you carry. This is the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Michigan district. And that’s why I wrote this book. And so, I’m going to share with you these five markers and five myths. And, we’re going to do it in record time so I get finished on time. So, the first one and I’m going to just give you a taste, just a

taste. Just a taste of the depths of what God has done among us as God’s people. And, we all together here are the church of Jesus Christ and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod aren’t we?

We all together are that and for years and years that has been known, and together we have walked to share the good news of Jesus. The first strand of DNA is PEOPLE. Love and care for people, their souls, their eternal welfare. You heard that in some of the quotes earlier. The myth is this and I heard this at the very beginning “The LCMS cared only about gathering existing Lutheran’s into churches.” It’s not true. It’s not true. Do you realize that between 1918 and just before 1947, the 100th anniversary of the Lutheran—Church Missouri Synod, there were nearly two hundred thousand adult converts who first confessed their faith at LCMS altars? That’s six thousand five hundred new adult converts a year. That’s 18 per day for almost 30 years in a much smaller Synod and lower population in our nation. The LCMS cared deeply about people, and it started at the very beginning, and you can read about some of the details in the book.

But, CFW Walther. You know him don’t you? How many of you know CFW Walther? His lectures utterly form the book *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*. He is known as very appropriately the father of Confessional Lutheranism in the United States. This man’s heart yearned for people. Their souls. The care of their souls. You know that German word, *Seelesorger* doesn’t mean just visiting the homebound, it means caring for people’s souls, their eternal welfare. Implicit in the word *Seelesorger* is mission, is Gospel DNA and in a sermon he preached in 1842, five years before the Synod was founded, called *Bringing Souls to Christ, Every Christian’s Desire and Duty*, listen to one of the founding fathers of our church. Listen to his passion. This is the DNA you and I have, you and I share, you and I steward.

He said, “The Christian looks upon his neighbor with sadness when he knows that the neighbor does not yet know the Gospel.” Thoroughly Lutheran, vocation and neighbor. “A Christian might even wish that he could persuade the whole world to know that they can leave their sins and futile life behind and take hold of Christ. The holy desire to bring souls to Christ begins immediately, as soon as the light of true faith comes into a person’s soul bringing with it the fire of true love for others. This holy desire is inseparable from a true faith. Whoever has no desire to bring someone else to the knowledge of the saving Gospel has certainly not yet come to know the heavenly power himself. Dear friends, through faith a Christian receives not only the holy desire to bring souls to Christ. He receives this task as a sacred duty. No one should say, ‘I’m not a pastor, teacher, or a preacher; let them teach, instruct, comfort, and lead souls to Christ. I wish to remain in my own vocation.’”

Walther says, “No, Christian, you are baptized, and through

holy baptism you have already been called and anointed to be a priest of God.” The priesthood of all believers. It’s foundational for who we are. And then this, the Catechism, the confessions. “Go through all the chief parts of the Catechism and in each part you will find the declaration that a Christian should care for the salvation of his neighbor. The Christian Church is a great mission house.” Don’t you love that? A great mission house. “Each Christian in it is a missionary sent out by God into his own circle to convert others to Christ.” We are in a room filled with missionaries. CFW Walther said that the purpose of all theology—he said this in his pastoral theology—“The purpose of all of theology is to lead sinners to salvation in Jesus Christ.” That’s our founder. People. People. The love and care for people, and folks let me tell you, I believe that if I stop this talk here right now, this would be enough. Because I believe this is the greatest challenge we face as the church today, to develop once again a heart for people.

I believe back in the 1960’s and 70’s, Satan was assaulting Sola Scriptura, and you know, some of you know, the difficulties, the brokenness that took place in our church body then. I believe, and he’s sneaky about it. He disguised it as intellectual arrogance. Today I believe Satan is assaulting Sola Gratia, grace alone, and he’s sneaky. Will we let him infiltrate so that our hearts grow cold and we forget that we are here to reach all people? We’re not a holiness body where we look at sanctification before we preach the message of justification. Justification is the material principle, the central article of our faith, grace alone. Justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We need to be stirred again and on our knees in repentance before the Lord and say, “Oh Lord, we love because you first loved us. Fill us with your love so that it overflows into the lives of everyone around us. Let us be known as a church that cares about all people and that holds out the cross of Jesus Christ.”

The second DNA strand is MULTIPLICATION. The people of this church body loved others so much, were so grateful for the gift of life and salvation in Jesus Christ that they shared it with others. Don’t let the word multiplication scare you. It’s not a programmatic expensive arduous task that you have to somehow inject into your church and get a committee going or task force. It is simply what today’s people know as sharing, paying it forward, giving the gift. You know, my wife and I have a granddaughter, seven years old, she’s a cute little girl and one habit she developed early in her life was to say, “Grandpa, can I have a taste of what you have?” She’d be grabbing things on my plate. If we went to the famed Texas Whattaburger and I got a Coke and she got a Dr. Pepper, she’d say, “Grandpa can I taste what you’re drinking?” And as a grandfather, what would I say? Of course I’m going to say, “Yeah, here you go. I’m not worried about it. Taste and see. Taste it.” As God’s people, this broken culture needs a taste. Taste and see the Lord is

good. Multiplication means sharing the taste of what we’ve been given to people who are parched in this culture, in emptiness.

The myth is the LCMS was a small, inward focused group of immigrants. Just not true. Just not true. Let’s look at the growth of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and I want you to know. Some people say, “Oh it was German, they were were reaching Germans”. These were not compliant Germans lining up in churches and at baptismal fonts to say, “Hey let us in. We’re all here. We’ve just come over.” No, if you read about what our missionaries faced, these were hardened folks, people running away from the church a disparate group even of Germans. They weren’t even together as Germans. They reached out to people who didn’t know Jesus.

This was the yearning. This was the cry of our forefathers. And look at what happened, now imagine, what if President Maier, a couple of circuits said, “Let’s get together. We’re going to get together in Michigan and there’s going to be 12 congregations and we’re going to see if we can reach out with the Gospel and maybe”—what would you hope would happen over the first 50 years of that work together? Maybe you’d say, gosh wouldn’t it be great if those 12 congregations grew by tenfold in 50 years? One hundred and twenty? Wouldn’t that be an amazing victory and awesome? Yeah. And what if over the next 50 years they said, “Well what if we grew by tenfold again? 1,200 congregations right here in Michigan reaching out the Gospel?” You’d be astounded. You’d say it’s nothing short of a miracle, that it’s totally by God’s grace. We plant, we water, but God gives growth, there’s evidence of it. Now what do you think of this? How do 12 congregations in 1847 grown to 5,240 congregations and how did 4,000 people in those 12 congregations multiply to 1.5 million souls in the first 100 years of LCMS history? This is a movement of the Gospel, folks. Statistically it rivals the Methodists and the Baptists in the 1800’s. This is a miraculous work of God.

By the time CFW Walther died in 1887, he saw that little group of 12 congregations in 1847 grow to over 2,000 congregations and preaching stations. Reaching three quarters of a million people. Today we’d be suspicious today. We’d say, “They must be doing something wrong to grow like that, come on. What kind of things are they doing in their churches?” This is our church body. In fact, if you take a look at church multiplication movement experts. This is not church growth. This is the movement of the Gospel. This is the definition.

Let’s look at the statistics. Then we’ll look at the definition. Just you see statistically what happened for the Missouri Synod compared to U.S. population. 1800’s totally outpaced U.S. population. A slight pause there during World War One, anti-German sentiment, immigration laws changed, birth rate dropped. There was a pause. The Missouri Synod

was wondering about its identity. It kept the mission voice going. God opened a great door. We'll talk about two church planting movements that started here. But, what you see here is that the growth of the Missouri Synod outpaced U.S. population growth. That means adults were coming to know Jesus through our ministries in the Missouri Synod. We went from less than one percent of the U.S. population in the early days to about one and a half percent of the population in the U.S. around in the 1950's. We overtook the U.S. population because we were reaching people for Jesus. New people were becoming Lutheran, becoming Christian, following Jesus.

What's a Gospel movement? David Garrison defines it this way: "A rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment." As I studied movements, church planting movements, I realized the Missouri Synod is a classic church planting movement. Some people criticize that the Missouri Synod used German in those early days to reach out. But, God was flooding our shores with people who spoke German. It was a gift God gave to reach people with the Gospel and it was a people group population segment that overtook the population.

The LCMS shows a history of two movements and you saw those in the statistics. The first one was from about 1865 to 1917, as many as one new church was starting every other day during some of the segments in history. As Dr. Larry Rast who was here today says, "This was an inclusive movement bringing to the truth to cultural Germans." It wasn't saying, "Only if you're German". It was saying, "Bring it, come on in, come on in, we have a gift to share". It was inclusive and outreaching. Even the name of the Synod at the time showed inclusiveness. The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states. Of course, in the German language. People liked long titles back then of sermons and everything, organizations. But, it was to show inclusivity. "You are welcome. You are welcome. Come into the shores. You're welcome. We're evangelical. We're Lutheran." From any area of the burgeoning Western corridor of this nation, come on in, that's what it was all about.

The second church planting movement was from about 1937 when God opened a door till about 1967 planting as many as one church every three and a half days and it's called Bringing Christ to the Nations. President Maier's grandfather was the open door God gave to our church body to affect a uniquely American evangelistic movement, one from our voice. And the theology of grace alone, sacramental theology, overtaking the nation. It was said that during the 40's and 50's you couldn't walk down a street in America and not hear the Lutheran Hour coming out the windows broadcast on the radio, from houses all through the community. We became known as the church

of the Lutheran Hour. Exactly, the church of the Lutheran... Do you remember that? The church of the Lutheran Hour. Church planting movement. Do you realize that the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod added on average one new church every week for its first hundred years?

This is an astounding statistic. It shows that God built multiplication. Starting new churches, starting preaching stations, reaching communities. Starting hospitals, orphanages, all kinds of creative ministry. Urban ministry. It was in the context. It was back then. But, God put this DNA in us to share. To share the good news of Jesus Christ because we've been loved so much. Time Magazine in 1958, April 7th, featured of all things, Lutheranism on its cover. And in the article, one of my favorite monikers for the Missouri Synod is mentioned as they talk about the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. They say this. So as I did research for this book I wanted to make sure I wasn't just imagining things, but that I was finding evidence. I was finding public attestation to what the Missouri Synod was. Not only from internal literature and statistics. From external literature as well. So, this is Time Magazine saying, "Converts are pouring in LCMS, attracted by billboards, magazine ads, TV programs, and in the Lutheran Hour, the most widely broadcast sermon on the radio. A campaign of preaching, teaching, and reaching." How many remember PTR? Preaching, Teaching, Reaching. Anybody?

I'd say when I was new in the ministry I talked to Pastors and they said all the time, "Man we used to get in the neighborhoods. We used to do this Preaching, Teaching, Reaching, there were some other things too. "Organized by the evangelical Lutheran Church." Us, notice our name. Us. "Is ringing door bells and organizing study groups." The article goes on. "The Synod salesmanship is"—and this is my favorite moniker for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, I think it can apply today—"The Synod's salesmanship is traditionally aggressive". We don't forsake the Scriptures. We don't throw the confessions away. We don't compromise the truth. But we share the good news, because we love the people for whom Christ died and we will do anything, anything it takes to see a soul have eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus. It says, "Its Lutheran Hour radio program is the best-known denominational broadcast on the air, and its TV program, This is the Life, is the biggest budget religious telecast in the U.S."

And then, I saw an affirmation for the statistic I saw, in the statistics, this is John Bankin. President John Bankin being interviewed by the Chicago Tribune of all things commenting on the 1950 synodical convention in Milwaukee. He said, "New Missouri Synod churches have been organized at the rate of one new church in each three and a half days for the last three years in Canada and the United States." We used to be together. "A new record for

adult converts.” Do you hear that? “A new record for adult converts to the Synod also is set in the triennium. Such rapid growth, with a half million adults expected to join within a decade raises problems of staffing churches with pastors.” In 1950’s, said we’re looking to half a million new people in the Lutheran church, adult converts. They didn’t reach a half a million, but they hit pushing four hundred thousand. You see, they said, “We’re going to get out there. We’re going to be traditionally aggressive and reach people for Jesus.”

Multiplication, sharing, it is who you are. So much of it started right here in your district and you helped found this church. So, what I’d like you to do is take a couple of minutes. We’re going to get you talking a little bit. A couple of questions for discussion. And, maybe you’re with your fellow delegate, lay, pastor, a delegate, maybe with a friend, maybe just two of you. I’m going to give you a couple of minutes to talk. But, here are the questions. How does the story of the Michigan district help you see the purpose of your church and ministry? Maybe a little bit more clearly today. And second, what might church and ministry multiplication, sharing the love of Christ, look like in your context and community? And not just speculating, but I attach this specific question here because it helps planning. What one step can you take in the next 90 days to advance this reality by 20 percent? Now, maybe it’s not 90 days, but it’s not 20 percent, but you hear what I’m saying, don’t you? What one thing can you do by about September? Maybe it’s prayer. Maybe it’s talking to people in your congregation? Maybe it’s getting to know some neighbors. I don’t know what it is, but what’s one specific action you can brainstorm right now? I’m going to give you about two and a half minutes to talk briefly. Go for it.

And you know, if you want to take these slides home and work through these questions with your congregations please feel free. That’s kind of designed to be a little tool for you to be able to take home. So, let’s get back together now and you know I blamed Dr. John Wohlrabe for this fashion, because I had him for History of American Lutheranism of all things. And he actually brought in for the very first time, into our class, Rev. Dr. JL Preus to speak for the first time publicly about the walkout to seminary class and I still have the recording of that. It’s amazing. So, he’s the one who got me started on the trail of all these wonderful accounts of our church body, the very uniqueness of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in its pre-founding and through its founding. Just absolutely amazing.

So, let me share with you the third DNA strand, TRUTH. And, the myth is the LCMS was solely focused on preserving pure doctrine. And because of time, I’m just going to go to one slide. I have great quotes from all kinds of people, but I’m just going to go to one slide from the, there’s Walther. Oh so good. I’ll tell ya this is good stuff. But, one slide from the confessions. Okay? And, I’m going

to teach you a German word. It’s Fortpflanzung. This is not a Volkswagen commercial. Fortpflanzung with PF in the middle of it. Fortpflanzung, and I’m going to read this quote to you and tell you where the word is. So, this is the preface to the book of Concord written by the confessors. In the preface, they set the foundation and purpose for the confessions. They let everybody know why they’re doing this, why are they confessing. All these things found in the book of Concord. What is their motivation and reason. And here’s one that’s, it’s in a bunch of places. This is one place that capsulizes it.

They said, “We are accordingly mindful of the obligation that we have by divine precept to do and continue to do everything that is useful and profitable to the increase and expansion of God’s praise and glory, to the propagation of that Word of his alone that brings salvation.” The word Fortpflanzung is propagation. It’s translated propagation. This is from the Triglotta. The German is so rich when it comes to the expression of the confessors.

In Spanish, Dr. Andrew Melendez translated extension, you hear the word extension. I was honored to know Doctor Melendez in Arlington Heights, when he was at the Lutheran home and when he was translating the Confessions. Propagation, Fortpflanzung, at the very foundation of the truth in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was not simply protecting and preserving it. But, that word literally, if you know a little German means planting forward, Fortpflanzung, planting forward. Our confessors gave us this DNA of what we do with the truth. In fact, it reminds me of Jesus’ great parable. Well, here’s a, before we get to that, there’s Luther.

Here’s Fritz, look at John H.C. Fritz in 1919. “In the exclusive doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church is not only to be found its strength, but therein also lies”—what?—“Its great missionary possibility.” This is what our forefathers realized. And Matthew 25 is a key spot where Jesus told us the whole thing. You know the parable of the talents. He gave one servant five, treasure, it’s treasure. It’s a measure of riches. Five talents, the other two, the other one. The guys with the five and two went and put, we hear in the Scriptures. Put it to work, put the treasure to work. That means implicit in the treasure we’re given is the promise that the word does not return void. It’s not that we have to try or figure it out. Or, oh we have to bear this burden of doing outreach. Jesus gave us the gift implicit with the promise that it works. And so, these servants who are not particularly knowledgeable about investing, they put it to work. And one earned five, the other earned two. And, what did the master say to those first two stewards?

“Well done, good and faithful servant.” Faithful. The word faithful. What does it mean to be faithful in the Scriptures? Putting the word to work and we know by contrast because that other servant who got one talent, what did he do with it?

Buried it. Why did he bury it?

He was afraid. He was afraid that treasure would be harmed, compromised. It'd be getting in the wrong hands. He was afraid. So, he took that treasure, wrapped it up, and he put it in a very safe place to preserve and protect it. And so, when he came back to the master, the master said, "Hey steward you know you're faithful too, I like ya." Right? Is that what he said? What did he call the servant? This is scary.

"You wicked and lazy servant." Folks, we've been given a treasure. If we just preserve and protect it, what will Jesus call us? It is not just for preserving and protecting, it is for propagating, Fortpflanzung. Our confessors knew that. The fathers who came before us knew that. Do we know that and do we not only know the word, but do the word as well? Not deceive ourselves by hearing, but seeing by God's grace through faith, empowered by the Holy Spirit, as President Maier said in the church of Acts. Boldly, put it into action because God has called us partners in grace and coworkers.

The final strand is ADAPTABILITY. Not the final strand, the fourth one. And the myth is that the LCMS never welcomed change. Now I'm not going to dig too deeply into this because you heard some of the adaptability of the, one of our initial presidents of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Wyneken, preached in English and translated the installation rite on the fly so the Chippewa could hear it. I think that's pretty adaptable. We know about the ministry of radio. We see reaching neighborhoods and preaching, teaching, and reaching. We see all kinds of TV, come on, media, built into our DNA is reaching all people in their context, never compromising the truth. And, that's what adaptability is. It's innovative movement of the Gospel founded on unwavering faithfulness to the Gospel. We don't have to be afraid, or make up new things, or go wild, or off the rails. Adaptability is innovative movement of the Gospel founded on unwavering faithfulness to the Gospel.

And so, a couple of more questions for ya. We're going to go right down to the wire with questions, give you a little time here. What, in your own church culture, might be getting in the way of propagating God's Gospel truth? And the second one: What needs to change in your life and in your church in order to help you reach lost souls? Reach souls who are being lost? Take a couple of minutes, do some brainstorming, and I'll call you back here.

Alrighty. I hope these questions, if you are noting them can maybe dwell in you and over lunch, you can do some conversation. I think not only should family business be done at a convention, but growth, and nurture, and encouragement. So, this is the mutual consolation, encouragement of one another in Christ.

I'm going to close out with our final DNA strand, SELF SACRIFICE. And again, I don't need to say much about it. You've heard the lives given, the health given, the riches,

the time given by so many. We are indebted to those who came before us in this church. And I know so many of you and so many of your congregations continue to sacrifice. Ultimately, if you have any doubt about any of this. If you say, "Oh Newman's making it up. He's just stringing it together. This Gospel DNA stuff." Let's look to the ultimate source then. Okay? Let's just look to the ultimate source. If you want to look to the ultimate source for the love for people, for sharing, multiplying disciples, for a message that is true and lasts eternally and never changes. For someone who bent over backwards, God himself becoming man in Jesus Christ. If you want to look for the DNA, look to him. But, "For our sake, God made to be sin the one who knew no sin. So, that in him, Jesus, we might become the righteousness of God".

The Gospel DNA is in our Lord and Savior. He has graciously given it to us. As the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, let's remember the rock from which we've been cut. Let's not believe the narrative the world is throwing at you that the church is somehow washed up or that we're just an old bunch of people in the Missouri Synod who are powerless, and paralyzed, and can't do a thing. Don't you trust that God has prepared who we are, these works, in advance for us to do right now? Don't you believe that God has us exactly where he wants us? It's not some church spinning out of control and oh we found ourselves here, we neglected so many things. God has us where he wants us now to do the work he has prepared for us to do.

And so, let us love the people God has placed into our lives. Let us do the work. Let's let the Gospel narrative, the powerful Word of God set the tone. Let's rise above the narrative of the culture and set it for a change. Let's not get distracted. Let's do exactly what the Apostle Paul encouraged Christians do in the first century as he said in First Corinthians 15: "Therefore, my brothers, since we have this victory in our risen Lord Jesus Christ, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing," Michigan district know this, "Knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

Let's bow our heads and pray. Gracious Spirit of God, fill us. Help us to remember the treasure you've given us. The one that activates our very lives. Bring us together as the church to bring your love, and life, and salvation to the people around us. We don't know how to do it. It's not by our might or power. But, it is by you, the Spirit of God. Bless us. Walk with us. Show us and teach us your paths. In Jesus' name we pray and all of God's people said, Amen.

Thank you very much.



2018 Michigan District Convention Essayist

From Film to Digital: 3 Changes for Next Generation Congregations

Rev. Bill Woolsey
FiveTwo Network

Deb called me on a Sunday night, 4 days before she was to start our 2 year training process. She was bailing. “I just can’t do this,” she said.

Deb had scored incredibly high on our assessment—most of the women who enter our process do—but she had never stepped out to follow her God-given passion in such an ambitious way.

Before taking early retirement from the Detroit police department, she focused on those who committed crimes against children. But in our prior conversation, when I asked what she thought Jesus wanted her to do with everything He had poured into her so more people could know Him, (“What does Jesus want you to start so that more people know Him?”), she shared how she had always wanted to start a home for young runaway girls, to keep them out of the sex trafficking industry. She wanted to protect before, not prosecute after.

She was calling me now, however, to tell me she was getting cold feet. This was too big of a leap. Thankfully, when you want to be convinced to stay where it’s safe, you should never call me.

Deb ended up bringing her team, and they have since launched Elli’s House, a wonderful ministry to women in east Detroit, bringing Jesus to teenage girls while rescuing them from the sex trafficking industry.

I share Deb’s story because without more Debs starting ministries that bring Jesus to their communities, more and more of our congregations will not be around for the next generation.

My name is Bill Woolsey, and I lead a network called FiveTwo. We help men and women start new ministries. All kinds of ministries, from churches to prenatal clinics to immigration services to homeless shelters. We will help you start new churches or restart dying ones. It matters not what you want to start. If you want it to connect people to Jesus, we will help you start it. And it’s this question (What does Jesus want you to start so that more people know Him?) that often changes people’s worldview, ushering them into a new future.

There have been a number of times in my life—perhaps also in yours—where people have posed me questions that helped me see reality differently, and thus I behaved differently.

My wife Julie and I have been married 34 years, but a few years into our marriage we were hitting some very rough spots. Very rough. So we found ourselves in a counseling session with an incredibly wise pastor who at one point turned to my wife and asked, “So what’s it like that your husband thinks you’re stupid?”

Technically he wasn’t asking me the question, but his question changed my immediate world.

I was dumbfounded. My wife graduated magna cum laude from Washington University in St. Louis, with a double major in math and education, in 3 years. She was literally the smartest woman I knew and still know. Yet somehow, the way I treated her in our marriage denigrated her to the role of stupid, subservient, also-ran.

I didn’t think my heart felt that way about her, but my behaviors certainly said it did.

That question changed my marriage because it changed me. It made me face the reality of what my behavior was saying to my wife and forced me to decide if that’s what I thought about her or not.

Good questions help us change perspective and thus change how we live.

Here’s a question for you: What will your congregation look like one generation from now? A generation is about 25 years. When your 2-year-old is 27 or your high school grandson is 40, what will your congregation look like? Will it still be on that corner of the neighborhood? Will it still be called St. Paul’s or St. John’s, or will there be a non-denom church in the building? Perhaps a Buddhist spiritual center. Will someone have bought the building and turned it into a nightclub like in NYC? Or razed the building for a gas station?

What will your congregation look like one generation from

now? Will it be a place where the next generation feels at home?

I'll admit, in today's techno-centric world, change happens overnight, so to look out 25 years, that's a tough one. Imagine having to guess what today would look like just 10 years ago.

10 years ago, if you heard "Elon Musk", you probably would have pictured an exotic cologne. We now know him as a guy who single-handedly reshaped the automobile industry and introduced reusable space rockets.

10 years ago, your grandma would have said, "Don't meet strangers on the internet, and never get in a car with one." Now, your grandma drives for Uber. Seriously. One of my favorite Uber drivers I used frequently in Houston was 74 years old. He was a transplanted Iranian. Once I found out he was 74, I started trying to load my own luggage, which only made him angry. "I'm not old."

Just a little over 10 years ago, the smartphone you are tethered to didn't even exist, and now, it's the most powerful computer you own. Actually, it's the most powerful computer that owns you. How many of you, when you go to the bathroom in the middle of the night—which most of you do—check your texts or emails or Facebook status? If you don't you're probably part of that crowd that turns your phone off at night to save the battery. Don't lie.

With this portable super-computer, you can read the paper, magazines or books; create emojis of yourself; play games at district conventions, and snap 20 pictures of your food before noon. With our phones, we take more pictures in 1 week (sometimes in one day) than most people took in one year with film.

Do you know who invented the first digital camera? A guy by the name of Steve Sasson, in 1974, who worked for, yes, Kodak. But Kodak only saw the world through film. It was unwilling to see the digital change that was happening around it. And thus in 2012 it filed for bankruptcy, ended up selling all of its patents to companies like, Apple, Google, Amazon, Facebook. Today Kodak is no longer Kodak. It's a nightclub or a gas station.

Is your congregation still seeing its world through film? How is it adapting to the digital changes happening around you? What will your congregation look like one generation from now?

One of the current popular answers to that question is, "Smaller, older, dying or dead," which is easily embraced as we look at our shrinking ministries. One stream of thought wants us to see ourselves as a remnant denomination, to forget about having vibrant, healthy congregations in this current, hostile environment where the Gospel shower has passed over us. We should accept our shrinking fate and hope that at some point in the future, God willing, we'll rebound,

as if denominations are somehow protected from extinction.

What if, however, the new start era was now? What if Ephesians 3:20 was really true and the power of the resurrection was really alive in the people of your congregation?

What if an aging congregation wasn't synonymous with a dying congregation? Is that possible?

Yes, it is if our congregations are willing to change—sometimes, just tweaks, other times, radical overhauls.

Having worked with a variety of new churches and ministries for the past 20 years and having watched and listened to the behaviors and mindsets that propel them forward, there are three shifts in thinking and behaving I suggest for you today, three changes in how you see the world and respond to that world so that your congregation would be a next generation congregation, a congregation where our kids and grandkids will enjoy the beautiful heritage and rich understanding of Jesus that our LCMS offers.

1. A Shift from 78 to 120

My wife, who's allowed this super-intelligent thing of hers to go to her head and now challenges me with all sorts of questions, recently lobbed a life-changing one my way: "What if we live to be 120 years old?"

The question came from a book she was reading, and at first hearing, I thought it ridiculous. I'm only 57. When I turned 55, I remember one of my children saying, "Dad, when you're 55, the whole world knows you're old."

Rightfully so that child's no longer in my will, but sadly, I agreed with that statement: I was on the downhill side. No stopping me now.

So when my wife posed her new worldview question, it seemed ridiculous because I was shooting for 80-something, maybe 90. But if I were to live to be 120, well, I wasn't even half way there. "How will my knees last for another 63 years? What about our retirement fund? And who's going to drive me around the last 40 years when I can barely see?"

More substantially, if I were going to live 120 years, what should I put in my body, what should I do to my body, and "What would I do with my life" for the next 60?

I would guess most of us would park this question in the bay next to winning the lottery: it's so ludicrous we don't spend time contemplating it. Most of us have put the finish line around 78, maybe 85, with the last 15-20 being work-free. "Retired" is our swing thought. I would venture no one here is planning on post-100. Certainly not 120, because frankly, who lives to be 120?

Actually, Jeanne Calment of France, the oldest documented human in modern times, she lived to be 122. Died in 1997. I wonder if when she was in her 80's she thought, "No need to

get involved in making my church a better place for the next generation; I'll be gone any day now."

In 1900, the average life span was no more than 47. Now, it's 79. Which means there's a bunch younger than that, and a bunch older. The United Nations estimated in 2015 about 500,000 people were older than 100, and with technological advances in medicine and safety, more and more of us will be in that crowd.

If you are older than 65, you join at least 46 million other people like you in the US. And your number is expected to more than double by 2060, reaching 100 million.

Of all the groups expected to grow in our church body, it's this 65+ group, a group which is facing 20-40 years of inactivity, but doesn't have to.

Take for example Andy and Su Eskelinen, who retired to the UP, only to discover there was no local church in St. Ignace. So they came out of retirement, which by the way I'm not sure what that means. Is that like a bear comes out of hibernation, or a mole comes out of his tunnel, or a butterfly comes out of a cocoon? No clue, but the Eskelinens, they saw a need and grabbed an old laundromat by the horns and converted it into a community coffee shop with worship space behind the free-standing fireplace. Harbor Hope Coffee has now become a staple in the community. All during a season they should have been eating bon bons on sofas.

Or Laurie McClellan and her husband Rick. Laurie is the top Ford salesperson in the southwest. Literally. When I was with her in April, she sold 3 cars in one hour, by text. Seriously. I said, "Laurie, you know we don't want you to have your phone out." "I'm sorry. I just sold another car." Laurie and Rick are in their 50s and 60's and are launching La Mesa Ministries in the west valley of Phoenix. At a time when Rick should be preparing for retirement, he's quitting his city planning job and moving full-time into leading this ministry that partners with the community to restore dignity to homeless individuals and families. La Mesa Ministries will include a resource center with showers, medical care, and career counseling. They are also kicking the tires on a tiny house community, allowing the homeless to own a home. Their slogan: Hope Happens Here. In their weekly worship for this community, they routinely welcome at least one person a month in the family through baptism.

Or Alan Muck, one of your own, a pastor in Hudson, MI, at a time most of us would be considering dialing it back, Alan's taking on the challenge of leading a near-closing congregation to replant itself for the young families of the community. Re-plants are one of the hardest new starts you can attempt, but Alan, through his baptism and its resurrection power, is more than up for the challenge.

Like many of the new ministries we help start in FiveTwo, these ministries are being led by people who are old and

past their prime and should be thinking about taking it easy. Instead they are allowing the wisdom and passion Jesus has given them to result in new expressions of the Gospel, blessing their communities with Jesus.

What if aging people in an aging congregation equaled new life? What if you invited the older folks in your ministries to build two-way bridges into the community? Would any of them say "Send me!"? Could your aging congregation have something to offer a changing neighborhood?

Something like baptism and the Lord's supper, God's gifts that cement our relationship with Jesus into our Google calendars and pin it on our Google maps, a historical, digital trail that can never be taken away?

Something like the Bible, source of timeless wisdom that is a history book, but not just a history book, a prophetic book, but not just a prophetic book. It's a book of how the world works today, the work of God in creation today, bringing His promises true today.

Something like Jesus, giving us who can only receive a grace-filled, hope-filled life with purpose. We are His Body on earth, made so by his life, death, and resurrection on earth. We have His Spirit within us as we go, wherever we go, unfolding the "What if's" of the resurrection, removing the limits we too often impose on ourselves.

What does an aging congregation have to offer? Nothing, if all of the old people take themselves out of the game.

A Shift from 78 to 120.

2. A Shift From Foreign to Local.

Virtually all of the congregations I meet, when I mention the word "missions," they immediately think of water wells in Ethiopia or schools in Hanoi or orphanages in Guatemala. Hardly any at all think of a new immigration ministry down the block or a preschool for the children of teenage moms in the strip center next door.

There is no longer any need to go to a foreign country to do foreign missions, if by foreign you mean an ethnicity or language or skin color different than yours.

The US is the 3rd most populated country in the world, in part because it's the most immigrated country in the world. There are more migration arrows coming to our country than any other on earth. When you add births, deaths, and migrations together, 7,200 people are added to the roles of the United States every single day.

This 7,200 includes the immigrants moving into Ann Arbor and Detroit and upstate, to the Puerto Ricans that arrived in mass in the Greater Orlando area, and the Hispanic migration which now leads all other ethnic groups moving to the US.

I live in Texas, where many of our cities are over 70%

Hispanic. To get a sense of the sea change of that reality, when our denomination was started, Germany and Ireland led in migrations.

The German migration peaked in 1900 with 2.7 million, strongly covering coast to coast. Germans were all over the place, staying in the top 3 through 1930, all the way to 1970.

But watch the shift starting in 1980; then 1990; 2000; and 2013, when this study ended.

No longer are the majority of our immigrants from Europe. The single largest migration from one country to another is now from Mexico to the US. Over 40% of the foreign-born people living in Detroit hail from Mexico.

Friends, more than any other time in our LCMS history, the ethnic makeup of our communities has changed. No more Franks and Friedas, Our neighbors are now Raul and Juanita and Mohammed and Doua. In the preschool of the church I pastored for over 20 years in west Houston, we had 400 children from over 15 different religions. We taught them Jesus during the day; they worshiped a variety of gods and goddesses at night.

Our LCMS—and many of our congregation—are paralyzed between living in what used to be and what really is. We are hanging onto what was—communities full of people who looked like us and valued Christianity like us—and what really is—communities full of multi-colored creations of Jesus, some who long for true community and often embrace many of Christianity's values, but others who look with disdain on our values, especially the exclusivity of Jesus as the one and only true God.

Many of our congregations are living in a film world, treating as enemies those who share different language and values and color, rather than embracing our digital reality that Jesus has placed us here for a time such as this. Friends, you can't reach people you hate.

Jesus doesn't hate people. Which is why He gave us His resurrection Spirit: for a time such as this. And that Spirit alive in us is able to do more with our meager resources than we can hope or imagine.

We must help our congregation embrace this new reality and act on this reality, which will require serious questions. Questions like, "What things we hold dear are we willing to give up so that we can embrace some of the values of our new neighbors?"

What present pains and missing blessings in our community could our congregation help address?

What partnerships can we form with Christians and non-Christians in our community so that we can bring the Gospel into their lives?

What worship ingredients, including music and imagery, are best suited for those who don't know Jesus in our

neighborhood?

What style of worship would speak best to the cultures in our community?

You, friends, are the Church Jesus planted in your community to care for your brothers and sisters who do not yet know they are your brothers and sisters.

We must stop neglecting our own communities for the sake of something more exotic and short term overseas. Jesus like in the feeding of the five thousand, when the Apostles came to Jesus and said, "Send the crowd away," Jesus commanded them, "You give them something to eat." So, too, Jesus commands us to care for the crowds around us.

So, what if you spent 80% of your mission budget on your local community? What if rather than sending a team overseas, at thousands of dollars in travel costs, you sent a team to Detroit to work with Restore Detroit, a new ministry led by a happy John Carrier and his team that is bringing joy and hope back to the city one block at a time?

The issue is not so much that the Gospel shower has passed us over as much as it is a new culture has sprung up around us, and we, as part of the Body of Christ, are commanded and empowered to care for it, love it, and bring Jesus to it.

Shift from 78 to 120, from foreign to local, and this last one:

3. A shift from Rev. to Deb

This shift has been central to our work here in the Michigan District these past three years.

Historically, when we have wanted to expand the church, we planted new churches, most often using ordained me. And the first thing we did was to start worship. But in this age of growing divide between church and culture, where worship is becoming the last thing on everyone's mind and the numbers of clergy are declining, we have to launch new expressions of the Gospel, that bring the Gospel into communities rather than expecting the communities to go find the Gospel.

I've been a pastor for 31 years. For the first 23 of those years, for the most part, our denomination agreed that we lived in one of the fastest growing mission fields on earth and due to great respect for the theologically trained men and women on the front line, we gave freedom exercised with authority and accountability that released a gifted laity to reach a changing culture. We pushed the decision of who should go and who should do and how it should be done to the congregational level, rightfully elevating the office of the pastoral ministry without elevating the pastor himself. Because we understood Ephesians 4. We understood that there are a number of offices—Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, and Shepherd/Teacher—given to the Church, but all with one singular purpose: for the equipping of the saints for the doing of ministry.

We knew also that shepherd/teachers rightfully and necessarily disciple the saved. They care for the sheep, pray for the sheep, fret over the sheep, weep over the sheep, and will go looking for the sheep who have wandered off.

But what about when the numbers of sheep in the fold are dwindling, when the sheep are getting too old to have lambs, all while the population of wild sheep are exploding? Who will go into the wild?

Over the last 2 decades I've worked with hundreds of ordained church planters and I love them dearly. We are kindred. I pray daily for more ordained planters to be raised up.

But in the last 5 years I've also had the honor to work with apostolic men and women who will probably never be ordained, in our sense of the word, yet possess a wonderful acumen of what it takes to connect people to Jesus by starting new. New non-profits, new for-profits, small new reading ministries and lay-led church plants, new ministries to displaced Puerto Ricans in Orlando and single mom Latina businesswomen in Palm Springs. Rural, suburban, urban. Matters not where. What matters is who. Who will go?

I have to say in my years of parish ministry, whenever I heard, "Who," I got kind of overwhelmed. I felt I had to answer "me," and I was already maxed out.

I wonder if when we who lead congregations hear "Who will go?", while there are some of us wired to go and spend some portion of everyday wondering "What if..." and if that's you, you should go, the majority of us are not so wired. And rather than be ashamed of wanting to tend the flock, we should focus that angst on elevating those in the flock who are wired to go, who love to go, can't wait to go because entrepreneurial is their name, and if they were but encouraged and disciplined would be phenomenal at launching Jesus into communities.

In our culture that looks more Hindu than Christian, that embraces all sorts of gods and goddesses who play well together, I propose to you the who is Deb launching Elli's house. And Amanda and Nate launching a ministry to the underserved in Whitsom Lake. We need to release Thawi and Vincent and Abby, transitioning an anglo congregation to a multiethnic one, and Alice caring for single mom Latina businesswomen, and of course Andy and Sue breaking out of that cocoon way up north in the bitter cold of the UP, God help them.

Jesus created these apostolic, sacramental entrepreneurial leaders to go and create. They like living in the rough and tumble neighborhoods. They love rubbing shoulders with the pierced and tatted wild and wooly folk who want nothing to do with any type of boundaries or rules.

For the Debs of the world, the challenge of connecting such folks to Jesus excites them. Energizes them. They love the chaos. They thrive in uncertainty. For them, change is a

resource and risk is their lifeblood. Calm waters are boring. Flatlands make them sleepy. And "no way" is for another day but not for this day because this is the day the Lord has made and by God we're going to get this done today.

The Debs and Nathans and Thawis and Alices look at their changing communities and wonder when they can jump in and start something that will keep the presence of Jesus alive and vibrant in that neighborhood that would rather have a mosque than your church. That would rather tear down your church and build a high rise. That community who no longer speaks your language, loves your food and admires your god.

Friends, I know there are men and women in your congregation who want to go and try something new if you would but invite them and support them. If you have a congregation of 100 people, studies tell us there are anywhere from 10-15 of those folks present. They may be teenagers or millennials or stay at homes or retirees. Quite possibly they've got a full-time job but it's not what they really want to do. They want to create something that makes a difference in their world.

We who are in leadership in the local church in the US, we MUST enlist and empower the Debs to start new expressions of the Gospel so that our communities meet Jesus in their daily routines, wherever their needs lead them.

We in FiveTwo want to help you do that. And here in Michigan, our two-year training process kicks off every 6 months in Detroit, at Faith Lutheran in Troy. Our next launch is in August. If your congregation is looking at its changing community and wanting to reach it through something new for the next generation, we would love to walk with you in that journey. Please send me an email and we will set up a time to talk with you.

What will your congregation look like one generation from now? Will it be older and smaller and dying or dead? Or will it be a vibrant and healthy community of baptized children living in the "what if?" Spirit of Ephesians 3?

May the aging bodies in your midst be filled with a new zeal for serving their community, living years of joy and purpose.

May the majority of your mission energy and effort focus be next door instead of across the ocean, reaching that Hindu neighbor or lawnmower dad who would rather do yard work than worship.

May there be an abundance of Debs in your midst starting new ministries bringing creative new expressions of the Gospel to changing neighborhoods and neighbors.

And while the sacraments and scripture and Jesus are rooted deep in your congregation, I pray that a generation from now your ministry will look radically different than it does today.

Thank you!



2018 Michigan District Convention Essayist

Mr. Gary Thies

Mission Central - LCMS World Mission

Gary Thies: Thank you. Thank you very much President Maier, President Harrison. I want to share with all of you folks only a person who is not normal would invite a man to come and speak to your convention that has absolutely no education. All of you sitting here have more education than I have. When I think of you, Judge, and all of the years of your education and your qualification, and here is an old farmer from western Iowa that has absolutely no education. God calls all kinds of people to get his work done. How many of you are laymen here? Stand up laymen.

Speaker 2: Please stand.

Gary Thies: Every one of the laymen please stand up. Stay standing. Quit clapping. I want to share with all of you here. I've just got a few short minutes, and this'll probably be the last time I'll get to see you here on earth, because I'm dying. You're dying too. Every day, we're one day closer to going to our real home, but I want to tell every one of you laymen standing up, if the church is going to grow, it's not going to grow because of the pastors only. It's going to grow because of people like you, because every one of you is a missionary. If somebody comes to you and says, "Are you a real missionary?", the words, "Yes," must come out of your mouth. You are people called by God. I want every one of you to know you can tell people about Jesus too. Thank you very much. Sit down.

I don't talk up on stage. I never go up near the altar. I've spoken now in more than 1,700 churches in the United States and Canada. Every Sunday I'm in a different church, but I don't go up to the altar or the pulpit. I have no right to, but I can give a report. I'll tell you why. Because the majority of the people in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, it's time

to wake up.

You know what I find when I travel to churches? The majority of people are dead asleep. You know what you're wondering right now if you're normal? I wonder how long this guy's going to talk? I hope it isn't too long.

I spoke up in a big church up in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The head Elder came over to me before I gave my report. I can't preach. I had one pastor say to me, "You're in violation of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, and the Book of Concord. You have no right to be speaking in these churches." Boy, I was glad he didn't mention the Bible.

I want to share with you folks my job is to give a report because 99% of the people don't have a clue what's going on in mission. That head Elder said to me, and he tapped his watch, he said, "We got rules here. One hour, and you're done." How many of you know where the church is really growing and the Spirit's working? Ethiopia. They're baptizing an average of 1,000 people a day there. In November, their membership exceeded nine million. Their services are four to six hours. The Holy Spirit is really, really working there. Nine million members in November. That's four times the membership of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. What are they doing? What are they doing that we're not doing? Our church for the last 10 years has decreased. That isn't what the Lord Jesus wants us to do! So it's time to wake up.

I want to share with you it's time to be not normal. I want to share with you I'm sick of normal people. I don't want to work, and I don't have time for normal people any more. You know what normal people say? "Boy, the congregation ought to do something."

That's what normal people say. "Boy, the congregation ought to do something." Pastor, you ought to do something. You got to work harder. No. It's up to us. The lay people have to come awake, and it's time to be different. We're in the world but not of the world. Do you understand what I'm saying? We're different, and it's all about Jesus.

The older I get, I'm 76 years old, the only schooling I've had is the school of hard knocks. I saw God's hand of blessing in my life. I started at the Mapleton Trust and Savings Bank when I was 18 years old for a dollar an hour filing checks in the bookkeeping department, and I want to tell you I saw God's hand of blessing in my life. He had a plan for me. I became president of that bank, and God blessed me in a wonderful way. I had a dad that went to the fourth grade. He wore a bib stripe and overalls all the time. Dad never read the Bible all the way through, but he knew Jesus loved him and died for him. He had a childlike faith, and that's what saves. You don't have to have all the exegetical and theological answers to tell people about Jesus. I wonder when's the last time, you lay person, when's the last time you told somebody about Jesus? It's all about Jesus.

I spoke in a big church out in Denver, and I'll never forget the pastor got up and said to the whole congregation, "If you've got your eyes and thoughts on something other than Jesus, you're off base." I want to share with you I spoke in a big church in Lincoln, Nebraska. They worship about 2,000 people there on the weekend. The pastor said, "Could you have like a children's message?" I said, "I love children. You know what? Little children get it. Little children get it." The more I think about this in Matthew 18:3, Jesus took a little child. He put that little child on his lap, and he looked over at the pharisees. They had all the exegetical and theological answers. He said to them, "Unless you change and become like this little child, you'll not enter into my kingdom."

When I had that children's message, there were 70, 80 little kids up there. I said, "Do you see these big people out here? A lot of them have forgotten what the mission of the church is." I said, "Do you children know what the mission of the church is?" Finally a little seven-year-old girl with blond hair raised

her hand slowly. I looked at her and I said, "Honey, what's the mission of the church?" She looked at me said, "Don't you know?" Whoa. I said, "Well, honey, I think I know, but what do you think?"

I wonder if I handed out a piece of paper to all of you dear folks and said, "Write down the mission of the church," I wonder how many different answers I'd get. Yet that little girl made me cry. She looked at me so innocently. She said, "It's telling people about Jesus." That's the mission of the church. Is that complicated? And yet it's so hard for people to understand.

You know, Martin Luther preached a sermon. It's in volume 69 of Luther's works recently translated. He spoke about this verse. John 20:21. When Jesus on Easter Sunday evening, he suddenly appeared in a room. Boom. Jesus could be right here with us in this room. You think he is? He's standing right up there by President Maier. He's right there next to you, because he's said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them." Luther wrote about John 20:21 when Jesus' first words were as he suddenly appeared after the resurrection. He said, "Shalom. Peace be unto you." And then he said, "As the Father sent me, I'm sending you." Luther said specifically in that sermon of April 23, 1523 at Wittenberg, he said, "That command applies to all Christians." It applies to each and every one of us. "The father sent me. I'm sending you."

Oh, there's still a lot of people like Thomas who said, "I got to put my finger in here before I believe." How many of you here in this auditorium know what the very last words of Jesus was? He's ascending into heaven, and he looks back at his followers, and what does he say?

Speaker 3: Go out into the world and preach my gospel to everyone-

Gary Thies: He said, go into.

Audience: The world.

Gary Thies: Go into.

Audience: The world.

Gary Thies: Go into.

Audience: The world.

Gary Thies: ALL the world. That starts at home. When I go to churches, I've heard this: "Oh, Gary, you're

all excited about this mission work, but we got to take care of our own. We got to take care of our own.” Every person in this auditorium knows about the Lord Jesus, and if you truly believe in him, I’ll get to see you again. I never say goodbye to Christian friends. I always say, “See you later.” It’s about the people who have never heard the name of Jesus. I think that’s so important we remember that Mark 16:15. That’s a command. That’s not an option. “Oh, our mission is we do this, and this is our mission.” Jesus said, “Go into ...

Audience: All the world.

Gary Thies: Now you’re kicking. That’s good. There’s that. There’s that little child that Jesus had in Matthew 18:13. Had that little child on his lap. The older I get, the more I understand. Little children get it. I spoke in a church in Columbus, Nebraska. I noticed there was a little seven-year-old girl sitting right with her mom and dad. She was electrified. She never even blinked. She paid attention. When I left there, I always talk about our missionaries. A week later, I got an envelope from that little girl. Made me cry. I opened up that letter that she had written herself. She said, “Missionary Gary, I was paying attention when you were talking. Enclosed is my gift for that missionary that you talked about.” That was one of the largest gifts that I’ve ever received in 24 years. There were 13 one-dollar bills in there. She said, “You give this to this missionary. I can’t go to these lands of darkness, but I can help send someone.”

Then what really made me cry, she sent a picture. She sent a picture. Do you get it? That little girl went home, and what did she do? She took it personally. Do you know what’s wrong in the church today? We don’t take Jesus personally. I want you to take it real personally today. Dale, you take this personally. Now think. Who did Jesus die for, Dale? Take it personally. Say it nice and loud, Dale.

Dale: Me.

Gary Thies: Jesus died for:

Audience: Me.

Gary Thies: Jesus died for me. He died for everyone. First of all, he died for me, and he knows your name. He knew when you were born you were going to be a pastor. God’s got this thing all figured out, and that little girl went home, and she took it personally. I want to share with all

of you the more I travel little kids get it. See that little girl there? I spoke in a big Lutheran school, and there was a whole bunch of kids there. I said to those children, I said, “Children, there are people in this town that don’t know about Jesus. Who ought to tell them?” Boy, those kids just looked like that. I said, “Who ought to tell them?” Finally, this little five-year-old girl sitting right up front, she just very gently raised her hand. I said, “Honey, who should tell them?” She made me cry. She looked up at me. She said, “Me. Me. I ought to tell them.”

I want to share with you—the older I get, the simpler it gets. See that man right there? I met him quite a number of years ago. There was a small group. See, only not normal people come to an evening event. Normal people are too busy. Anyhow, this guy was there. The Holy Spirit still works, folks.

I want to share with you the church does not need fundraisers. If you called me a fundraiser, I’d be offended. The church needs faith raisers. Somebody ought to tell the story. Who’s out telling the story of what the Lord Jesus is doing in his mission field? I spoke that night, and after I got through speaking this gentleman right here came up. You know how old he was? 90. He said, “Something happened in my heart tonight.” He said, “You know something, Missionary Gary? I never really thought about this, but you know, I can’t go to these lands of darkness to tell people about Jesus who’ve never heard his name, but I could send someone in my place.” He said, “I got farm land, and I’ve got income, and I’m doing nothing.” He said, “I want to do something for Jesus.” I said, “John. You got it.”

God’ll call you. He said, “You got a card?” “Oh yeah,” I said, “Here’s my card.” I could tell there was a change in John. Now do you know what happens to most people, and I’ve had this happen so many times, they get all excited and say, “Gary, have you got a card?” Oh yeah. Then Monday comes, and everything goes back to-

Audience: Normal.

Gary Thies: You guys are awake. I thought you were asleep. Yeah. Goes back to normal. Then, “Oh yeah, that guy was kind of interesting,” and then there go ... It wasn’t that way with John. John sent me a letter with a huge check. More than about five or six congregations

put together. He said, “Missionary Gary, will you help me pick out the missionaries that need help?” Do you folks all know in this auditorium that our missionaries now have to raise 100% of their own support? The majority of people don’t even know that. They think, “Oh, when I put my gift in the plate on Sunday morning, that’ll pay for all the missionaries.” These missionaries we’re sending out, Pastor Donald Neuendorf who spoke at the service this morning, his son’s going to go to the mission field. They’ve got to raise their own support.

We’ve got to be a part of that, and then three months later John sent the same amount of check, and then three months later John sent the same amount of check, and three months later John sends the same amount of check. I went down to see John on his birthday not too long ago. His 100th birthday. There you go. Woke up at 90. That guy right there has done way more than I don’t know how many entire congregations. That’s what God can do.

I get to meet the most wonderful people. See that lady right there? That’s Clara Gutz. I met her 24 years ago. As soon as I met Clara, I knew immediately she was not ...

Audience: Normal.

Gary Thies: She was not normal. She really got it. Little Clara and I have written back and forth, and she’s just a wonderful soul. Met her in Osmond, Nebraska. All these years. This last year I went back to speak at Osmond. I got up and looked, and I said, “Hey, where’s Clara?” They said, “Oh, Gary, didn’t you know? She’s gone to the nursing home?” Whoa. I said, “I know where I’m going right after church service. You know where I’m going? Nursing home.” I went right out there. There I got to see my friend Clara, and we prayed together and had a chance to talk about Jesus another time.

Clara’s 102 years old. I got ready to go, and little old Clara said, “Missionary Gary, before you go ...” She reached over to her little dresser, opened the drawer, pulled out a check.” She said, “Would you see that the missionary that needs it gets this check?” 102 years old, still doing something for Jesus.

I want to share with you that man. This is very common. When I go to churches and talk about the mission of going into all of

the world, I run into some very interesting comments. As the people were going out of church, a man like this grabbed a hold of my hand. He said, “You know missionary Gary, you had a pretty interesting talk, but to be quite truthful, we don’t need to be sending these missionaries to Africa and China. We got enough work to do right here in this country.” “Oh,” I said. “I agree with you. This third largest mission field,” but I said there’s a big difference in this country. I said, “Every little town and village you go to has one of these buildings, you know. Like this with a cross on the top. It’s filled with people.” I said, “Do you know who it’s filled with? Missionaries, and they don’t know it.” Do you understand what I’m saying?

I looked at him and I said, “When’s the last time you told somebody about Jesus? You’re a missionary. We’re loaded with missionaries here, but they don’t know it.” He looked at me and he said, “Nobody’s ever talked to me like that before.” Time to wake up. I said, “You know Jesus’ command said, ‘Go into all the world.’ That’s not an option. That’s a command.”

Everyone in the United States knows the name of Jesus. In foreign countries, you can go to some of these countries, they’ve never heard of Jesus before. They never heard his name. Somebody said, “Wait a minute. He said that everybody ...” All you have to do is have a man hit his thumb with a hammer, and you’ll find out how quickly he knows the name of Jesus.

I met this couple a number of years ago. I was speaking, and they came up to me after the service. They said, “Missionary Gary, we don’t go to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. We just were visiting today, but do you think we could support some missionaries?” I said, “Is the Pope Catholic? Is the sky blue? Is the grass green?” I’ve written for 18 years to these people. Every month they send a gift every month for three of our LCMS missionaries. What wonderful Christian people. I had that picture taken in my office. I work for the guy on the right hand side. I work direct, and I want you to know those faithful Christian people are members of the Baptist church. I wonder how many of you realize in this auditorium that the largest supporter of our missionaries through Mission Central is not a

member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod? I wonder how many of you knew that? Interesting how God works.

There it is. That's a miracle place. I believe in miracles. I expect them. We've had 5,000 visitors this year, and the only kind of people that come to this place are people who are not

Audience: Normal.

Gary Thies: That's exactly right. You see our office right there? Can you all see our office right there? That's where my office is. We have three bedrooms upstairs for our missionaries. This past year, we had 118 missionaries and their family members from all over the world come here. They speak here in our barn. See that barn? I hauled 21 loads of manure out of that barn. That's a lot of manure. That was the hog house. We use that as our fellowship hall. We had to clean all the hog manure out of there. That was too small, so we had to build our ministry center, and then just this last year we completed our creation theater.

I'll get to show you that. That little wayside prayer chapel was built by volunteers. We're averaging five people a day to stop and pray there, and I don't have a clue who they are. Interesting how God can use ... That's my office in that old farm house. Lot of people don't know the magnitude of God's blessing here on Mission Central. That day we had 400 envelopes come in with gifts for our missionaries. You know the interesting thing? Can you see the picture of my boss in the background there? I'm sorry President Harrison, your picture is not there. Thank you for laughing President Harrison.

I want you to take a look at this picture. You see what that is? That's our volunteer staff. 102 volunteers. 102 volunteers. None of them get paid. You know the worst kind of volunteer you can have come in and says, "What are we going to do today?" Every one of those volunteers has a title. I want to share with all of you here today I wouldn't be here if God hadn't sent a wonderful friend who said to me, "Gary, I can't get up and talk, but I could get you there." We have five volunteer pilots that fly me. What a wonderful blessing to have my dear friend Harry Barr from Lincoln, Nebraska fly me here. If you think I would've flown commercial, I'm sick of commercial airlines. I'm sick of late flights. I'm sick of changes. I'm sick of long lines, and I'm sick of all this

inspection stuff. If I'm going to go anywhere, if the pilots don't fly me, I'm not going. Ladies and gentleman, the most important person in this entire auditorium is sitting right over there. Mr. Harry Barr. Stand up Harry. Stand up.

That's what God can do. God sends people to us just the right time. Those of you that are interested in Mission Central, I want you to know that you can go to missioncentral.us. Last month, we had 20,000 visitors for this not normal place. You'll see the stories. If you go under Not Normal News, you'll be shocked. I want you to know all of those people right there are part of that. We operate this thing with no overhead. One lady said to me, "Well you've got overhead. You've got lights and upkeep and maintenance, insurance, and LP gas." I said, "Oh sure, but what do you think I was doing for 33 years getting ready for this?" She said, "Well, you don't pay for that. The church ought to pay for that." You know what kind of woman she was? Normal.

God has blessed me for a reason and purpose. I've deeded all of our farms and everything that I have to this so this keeps going after I'm in heaven. See that picture right there? That guy on the right hand side, he'll be able to go to every church. He's a pastor. He's got his doctorate in theology. 16 years in the mission field. That's Dr. Rev. Brent Smith. I interviewed him 24 years ago before he went to Kazakhstan. As soon as I interviewed him, I started to cry, because I knew he was the one. I had to wait 24 years for him, and the time was right. I said, "Brent, I'm 76. I'm not retiring." If any of you say, "Oh that Gary, he retired ..." You know what Dad taught me when we was cutting cockaburs and sunflowers out of the corn? I said, "Dad, do you think we could rest?" He said, "Son, you can rest when you're dead."

I want to share with you that young man will carry on when I'm in heaven waiting for you. The work of Mission Central is so critical. We don't have to take anything out for the operations of Mission Central. It all started there in 1994 in the basement of our home. In a very small way God called me. I want to share with you, if any of you are sleeping now, if any of you are sleeping up there in the back, wake up, would you? The next picture I'm going to show is a miracle picture.

I took this picture on March the fourth of 2004. I walked out to the highway there after Maxine had the driveway scooped out. I walked out there, and I turned, and I took the picture of our sign at Mission Central in the snow. Then I downloaded the picture when I got to the office and showed it to my secretary, and she started to cry. This is a miracle picture. There's no cross to the right of the sign. No cross there. You come out and see. There's no cross there, and suddenly this cross appears. I want to share with you we were all shocked, and then I began to look. This is the light pole for the parking lot, and in the distance that's a terrace with brush growing up in the terrace. I didn't see that when I took the picture. You think God still talks to us? He said, "This is my place."

You know what normal people say? You sure were lucky. Boy, that was a coincidence. That's what normal people say. That's a miracle picture. Here in the middle of nowhere in a place called Mission Central, and God has showered down his blessing. It's an amazing thing, because that bus is from Wisconsin, Michigan, South Dakota, Minnesota. You see all them people coming up there? They'll spend the day there. It's a miracle place, but the only kind of people that come here are the people who are not normal. That's right.

I want to share with you we have lots of people. Lots of people that come in buses. We built a new ministry center. We made a horrible mistake. Can you see what the mistake is?

Audience: Too small.

Gary Thies: Too small. I took this picture, and I want you to know that picture right there I counted people from five states. The people that come to Mission Central are not normal. They don't care how far they drive. Normal people say, "Oh, we don't have time. We were in church Sunday, pastor. That's enough." That's the way the barn looked when we started. It was the worst looking place you've ever seen. Have any of you ever heard of buyer's remorse? Whoa. I want to tell you, and God said, "Don't worry Gary. I'm with you." That's the same building. I want you to know people come by the thousands to that old barn.

We have the most fabulous museum in there. Artifacts from around the world we have missionaries bring us, and I've had the

privilege of traveling to 75 countries to film the work of our missionaries. I want to share with you I've got stuff in that museum, we have things in there, that nobody has seen. Unbelievable. Take a look at that little snake up there. That's the largest African python you've ever seen.

Now we know God has called us in another way. He's called us in a special way. Can you tell me when I'm done? How much time have I got?

Speaker 5: Yep. 15.

Gary Thies: 15 minutes? Thank you. See that right there? That's our new creation theater. 23 years ago, a man said, "I shot these animals for my family." I said, "Ron, you should show these." He said, "They're for my family only." He died last year. His wife called me and said, "Gary, would you be interested in the trophies?" I said, "Let me talk to my boss. His picture's above my desk here." After I talked to him, I called her back. I said, "I'm bringing the tape measure, because we've got to figure out how big a building to put up."

You know what we got to do? We got to tell people what happened on the sixth day of creation. You know what these young people are getting when they go to college. The story of creation's a joke, and so God gave us Creation Theater. We have the background like the jungles of Africa, and these are the animals that God gave us to tell these young people and adults about it. Two weeks ago, that week, we had over 700 people. That's about the size of your group here come in one week to hear the story of how God on the sixth day, the morning and evening was one day, and he made all these animals unique. I want to share with you, it's quite a story, and we're getting thousands of young people to come and hear the real story of how God made everything. Big problem, again. That group, we had to sit some people on the floor. It's a fabulous story, and we present it in a very exciting way.

I want to talk about missionaries. I see we have some ladies here. I want to share with you dear some of our greatest missionaries are ladies. It's real easy to say, "A missionary? That's got to be a man, and it's sure got to be a pastor." I want to share with that lady is one of the finest missionaries I've ever worked with. Walmart checkout lady. She said, "All my life I wanted to be a missionary." I said, "Well, can

you speak English?" She said, "Yes." I said, "We have a place for you in Thailand to teach English, and you can use the Bible stories to teach English." That lady right there, Robin McCoy, went to Thailand, and then she started her missionary journey.

Do you see that lady on the left hand side? That little lady right there is a 17-year-old Thai girl. When Robin got there, that girl from Thailand came to Robin and said, "Could I take your class?" "Yes," Robin said, "You can." They became friends. After one year, that young Thai girl said, "Teacher Robin, do you think I could be baptized and be part of the Lord Jesus?" She said, "You sure can." Little Sherri became a Christian, and six months later she came to her teacher and said, "Teacher Robin, I have terminal cancer. I'm going to die." Robin came to my office, made me cry. She said, "I held little Sherri in my arms when she was dying. She looked up at me and said, 'Teacher Robin, thank you for coming to tell me about Jesus. If you hadn't come, I wouldn't have known about my savior. I'm going to be with Jesus in my real home, and I'll be waiting for you teacher Robin.'" That was the last word she said.

Oh yes. God has all kinds of people. Uses all kinds of people to bring his message. I want to see the hands of the people in this gathering that know that couple right there. Raise your hand. You know the last time I spoke to your group Pastor Maier, he was there. Pastor Larry Matro was there. Now God's called them to the most primitive country I've ever traveled to of the 75 countries I've visited. That country is the jungles of Papua New Guinea. Straight north of Australia. I want to share with you these are two of the finest missionaries that we have on the field. Just north of Australia is where Papua New Guinea is. It's a land of jungles and mountains. There are still stone age people here. It is a primitive country where the roads are very, very bad, and the people, the people are jungle people.

You know, I have a little sensitivity in me. You know what the definition of poverty is in this country? Somebody who doesn't have a cell phone. I want to share with you Jesus died for these people. These are jungle people, and Jesus died for them, and they need to know about Jesus. That's part of the Good News Lutheran Church there. They have about

100,000 members. These are the people we need to go to. There's animistic people that paint their faces white and put on prayer beads when someone passes away. This lady has been chewing betel nut, and Jesus died for her.

I want to share with you this picture makes me think of Numbers. Numbers and the stories there, but it also makes me think of Revelation chapter seven where John said, "And there I looked and beheld a multitude that no one could count from every nation and language and tribe standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb." You and I are going to stand in front of these people. Those are Christian people. They had a little chapel in their village. These are the people we're reaching out to. These are people right now that your missionary Larry and Tina Matro are meeting with. They have cultures, bride price.

These are the jungle people, and think it's important we understand that God called us to go to all the world. Yes, they're different. They have a different culture. Right now we're dealing with Sanguma, which is connected with witchcraft and witches among these people, but we're helping because here's our first, second, and fourth year seminary students. We have a seminary there, and that's the one that Pastor Larry Matro is helping with. This is what they have for their lunch. Kaukau. Sweet potatoes. That's one of their dorms. These are the Bible school students. We're teaching Bible school to students to go out and start Bible classes. These are all Sunday school teachers. Their culture is very different. I wonder if your house looks like that.

There you go. These children were so interested when a missionary family came, and they had a little baby. They'd never seen a white baby before. They saw this little baby of Michael and Beth Ritzman, who are in the jungle there. You know that guy carrying that box? That's Larry Matro. He's carrying it, and I think that box is awfully heavy. I want to share with you there's that new little white baby, and of course what did Pastor Matro get to do? Bring that little baby into the kingdom. That's your pastor right there doing what he was called to do. There were hundreds and hundreds of people that came to see that baptism of that little white baby.

There you see Pastor Matro with a Bible class

there. That's your pastor right here from the district. There you see him with a men's Bible study group. There you see him with a group that he's just handed those Bibles to. They had never had Bibles before. He's walking across one of the bridges there. How'd you like to walk across that bridge? There he is in the white going across there. You sent him.

Remember what Jesus said. His last words: "Go into all the world." I want to share with all of you here it's been a wonderful, wonderful blessing to have this opportunity. You know, if there's just one person in this gathering, if there's just one person in this gathering that wakes up, then this trip was all worthwhile. I want to share with you if God can use an uneducated, unschooled man like me, he can use every one of you here. You have to take Jesus personally. Jesus died for me, and he knows my name.

I was normal until I was about 51 years old, and then a death changed my life. Oh, there was a time in my life ... I'm the worst sinner you've ever met. There was a time in my life when the only thing important to me was buying another farm and making more money. Then I woke up, and all these things don't mean anything. See, normal people, normal people are like this: "Gee Gary, I didn't realize that these missionaries had to raise 100% of their own support. Whoa, we got to do something. Here's \$10. That'll take care of it," and they drive off in their new Cadillac Escalade to their million dollar home.

The resources are unbelievable that are out there. It's all about heart business. I want to ask you, I hope the rest of your life you'll be people who are different. That people might look at you, Paul, and say to you, "Paul, you're different. You're not normal." You want them to say that. Has your wife ever told you that, Paul?

I hope I haven't offended any of you. My hope and prayer is that this maybe has helped you to come awake, to realize that Jesus knows your name. The one verse that changed my life dramatically when I left the bank was this word. These words from Ephesians 2:10: "For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which he has prepared in advance for us to do." God has a plan for each and every one of you sitting here at these tables. A plan for everyone. We just have to

allow it to happen.

Let's pray. Oh good and gracious God, thank you for loving us so much that you gave us Jesus, the greatest gift of all. Because of that gift, none of us in this room have to say, "I hope we'll be in heaven." No, we know for certain. Not by what we've done, but by what Jesus did on the cross. Because of his goodness and grace, this world is not our home. Heaven is our home. Heavenly father, we ask you to bless each and every one of these dear friends that are in this room. They're all part of our real family because we all have the same home. Lord, we ask your blessing on the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. We think so many times of the attacks of the devil, and there's such darkness in the world today. As I travel, I see a darkness in this country, Lord, like I've never seen before. Heavenly father, we ask that you awaken all of the people here.

Especially, Lord, we ask your blessing on President David Maier as he is president of this district. Give him courage to make hard decisions. Give him a zeal that people might know that he's so different. He's not normal. Heavenly father, help us to know that every person in this auditorium is a missionary, a witness for you. All this we ask with grateful hearts in the name of Jesus our risen living savior who's standing right here with us this morning. We ask this all in his precious name. Amen.

Now, I plan on seeing you all later, you know that don't you? I will be so happy to see you. God bless you and keep you, and I won't forget you. Judge, I won't forget you. We need more judges like you.

Minutes

Sunday, June 24, 2018

The Divine Service of Word and Sacrament was celebrated to commence the 102nd regular Convention of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Filling to capacity the Chapel of the Holy Trinity on the campus of Concordia University Ann Arbor, delegates and guests heard invoked the hallowed Name of the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit. Celebrant for the Divine Service was Rev. Bradley A. Smith, Pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Fraser. The sermon, grounded upon the convention theme text of Ephesians 3:20–21, was delivered by Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod:

”Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

The theme for the convention was “Imagine ... Living as God’s Saved and Sent Servants.”

Monday, June 25, 2018

Morning worship was conducted in the chapel. Rev. Brennan A. Woell of St. Luke Lutheran Church, Nunica, was the preacher for the service. His message was based on texts from Ephesians which declare and deliver Christ, our peace.

Monday Morning Session

The following registration report was received from Rev. David Reed, district secretary.

	Registered	Attendance
Voting Pastoral Delegates	249	215
Voting Lay Delegates	252	235
Total Voting Delegates present		450 (representing 261 congregations)
Advisory Ordained Ministers	49	34
Advisory Commissioned Ministers	62	40
Advisory Emeriti	73	55
Total Advisory Delegates present		129
Convention Guests		
Emeritus spouse	21	16
Vicars	1	1
Ministry tent exhibitors	61	51
Others	69	47
Total convention guests present		115
Total present		694

Declaring a delegate quorum assembled, Rev. President David P. E. Maier called the Michigan District Convention to order in the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Honorable David W. McKeague, judge of the United States 6th Circuit Court of Appeals and member of St. Luke Lutheran Church, Haslett, was introduced to delegates as parliamentarian.

The president also acknowledged attending members of the Michigan District Board of Directors and district Vice Presidents, all of whom were requested to stand in appreciation of their offices and service.

Noting only one slight Tuesday agenda exchange, the president entertained a motion to accept the agenda as presented. A motion was made, supported, and adopted to accept the Agenda as amended and the Standing Rules as printed.

Rev. Dr. Patrick Ferry, president of Concordia University, offered delegates a welcome to the university campus and expressed his desire for God’s blessings upon the convention. He noted the coincident date of this convention, June 25, as

both the 488th anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession and also the 1580 publication of the Book of Concord from which the university derives its name.

Chairman of the 2018 Convention Committee Rev. Dean Davenport offered greetings and individual acknowledgement to members of the district staff and convention committee, all of whom were invited to the dais to receive the appreciation of the assembly for their diligent service.

Rev. Theodore E. Voll, chairman of the New/Revised Constitution Committee, in the company of committee members Keith Altenburg and Aaron Baylis, offered remarks based on a written report to the convention distributed to delegates. He briefly reviewed the committee's charge of reviewing congregation constitutions and forwarding its recommendations to the district Board of Directors for approval. He noted that, by present records, 152 congregations of the district do not have approved constitutions on file. 110 have approved constitutions, but copies are needed for the district files. And 55 congregations have no constitution on file. Help was offered in improving these figures.

Two new congregations were acknowledged to have been officially received into membership of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Michigan District in the last triennium:

Family of God Lutheran Church, Detroit

Hope Lutheran Church, St. Ignace

A motion was made, supported, and approved to joyfully welcome these congregations.

The district president requested all Ministers of Religion—Ordained, Ministers of Religion—Commissioned, and representatives of congregations new to the Michigan District within the last triennium to stand and be recognized. Thanksgiving to God for these valued colleagues and servants in the church was expressed by a rising rendition of the Common Doxology.

President David P.E. Maier delivered the President's Address. Drawing substance from Holy Scripture, he marked the crucial character and calling of Christ's church to search for, reach, deliver the Word of Christ to, and equip those who have not known their Savior. Delegates were reminded of the indisputable spiritual war fought by Christ's church. Yet, it is the great consolation of God's people that, even against great warring spiritual forces, Christ Jesus himself has built and will sustain his church upon the Rock of the Gospel. The church, ever on the front lines in this spiritual warfare, is yet victorious with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Therefore, Christians live solely for the sake of proclaiming the excellencies of him who has called us from darkness into his marvelous light. Citing Luther, the president iterated how Christians must live only for others, bringing all to and serving all in the faith as Christ has done for us. Likening it to a Christian's DNA, he explained and applied the biblical images of salt and light replete in Jesus's sermon of Matthew 5. The president pressed the assembly to uphold unendingly the love of Christ saying, "*The best use of life is love. The best expression of life is time. And the best time to love is now.*" Asserting there to be no such thing as a secret Christian because all true believers are light in Christ, he appealed for all to shine ... shine solely in Christ. It follows therefore that all who would shine the light of Christ need to spend more time in that light—in reading Scripture (subsequently to be addressed by convention resolution). Emphasizing a theme which would resonate throughout the convention, the president gave repeated reference in Scripture to the Christian's "boldness and confidence," always ready to give an answer; always with Jesus as the heart of our witness; and always intending not only to go out with boldness in search of all but to return with them in the shared joy and confidence of Christ—living together as God's saved and send servants.

The Chairman of the Nominations Committee, Mr. John Nutzmann, was called to the dais. Attending him were committee members who were individually introduced. He summarized the task of the committee to seek, confirm eligibility, obtain consent, and assemble biographical information regarding all nominees for district office. He noted that Mr. Michael Lutz recently submitted a declination for the LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations. It was also noted the name of Karen Reincke was incorrectly listed among commissioned minister candidates for the district Nominating Committee rather than with lay nominees.

On behalf of the committee, Chairman Nutzmann offered a motion to accept the full slate of candidates as presented (Workbook II; Convention Nominations, pages 1-18). From the floor, a voting delegate moved to amend the slate by including Rev. Stephen Starke as candidate for the LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations. The motion to amend was supported and adopted with subsequent approval of the main motion to accept the slate as amended.

To superintend convention elections, the chairman of the Elections Committee, Rev. Erik Cloeter, was called forward with the committee. He introduced its members and expressed thanks to the district staff who have served admirably in

preparation for the convention. He also confirmed that all voting delegates were sitting at appropriate tables with voting devices. The convention was led in prayer prior to balloting.

Vice President Mark Brandt was granted the privilege of chairing the first election. The names of nominees for the office of president were presented. With a first ballot 78.4% majority, the Rev. David P.E. Maier was elected to a fourth term as district president. Upon announcement of the result, the convention was invited to stand and sing the Common Doxology. In recognition of support given both to her husband and the district, the president's wife Pat Maier, accompanied by the president's family, was escorted forward. Cordial expressions of appreciation were exchanged with flowers. President Maier introduced his family and requested the continued prayers of the church.

By a first ballot 65.1% majority, incumbent Vice President for the Metro East Region Rev. John M. Duerr was returned to office. Election of a regional Vice President for the West Region resulted in a 59.3% majority for Rev. Dean M. Davenport. In further separate ballots for their respective regions, Rev. Mark D. Brandt (North/East region); and Rev. David A. Davis (West region) were returned to office with 67.5% and 55.0% margins respectively.

The chair invoked orders of the day to comply with the agenda. From the dais, the president extended cordial recognition of former district presidents and their wives: Rev. William and Barbara Hoesman and Rev. John and Wilma Heins. Thereafter, the convention was granted a brief recess.

Following the break, delegates were shown a video presentation regarding the Luke Project 52 Clinic. Subsequently, Rev. Brad Garrison, Director of the clinic operating from Family of God Lutheran Church, Detroit, spoke regarding this free pre-natal and infant care ministry striving to address the disproportionately high infant mortality rate in the city and to minister to mothers.

The convention was thereafter introduced to the first convention essayist. Rev. Michael W. Newman, recently elected president of the Texas District-LCMS is author of *Gospel DNA, Five Markers of a Flourishing Church*, a copy of which was distributed to all convention delegates at registration. His essay drew upon themes from that work which investigated Gospel movements around the world for lessons applicable to the current context and challenges of our synod. After acknowledging the current spiritual battle and affirming the significance of our identity as Lutheran Christians, Rev. Newman provided insights regarding five Gospel DNA strands or markers with contrary myths subsequent to each:

1. People. Christians care for people. Myth: the LCMS cared only about gathering existing Lutherans.
2. Multiplication. The church is traditionally aggressive in mission. Myth: The LCMS was a small, inward-focused group of immigrants.
3. Truth. Implicit in the Word is the promise that it is effectual. Myth: The LCMS is loveless or limiting.
4. Adaptability. The church ever brings forth anew its treasures. Myth: The LCMS never welcomed change.
5. Self-sacrifice. Love is inseparable from sacrifice. Myth: The LCMS has never been passionate about missions.

The essayist completed his presentation with prayer.

Offering greetings on behalf of the seminary, Dr. Larry Rast, President of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. (CTSFW), spoke of the continuing partnership with the district. He shared positive news that the seminary now offers tuition-free theological education to its students—for those both in pastoral preparation or in diaconal training. The seminary is also fiscally sound entering its 173rd academic year.

Dr. Kent Bureson, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, also spoke greetings on behalf of Dr. Dale Meyer, students, and staff of Concordia Seminary. The seminary is poised to welcome gladly for its 179th academic year an enrollment 30% above a year ago. The St. Louis seminary also parallels CTSFW in offering students free tuition. God has shown great favor to the church through His faithful seminaries.

Expressions of thanks from the chair were extended to Lutheran Benefits Group and Lutheran Trust for providing the generous picnic dinner Sunday evening. Prayer was offered as the convention prepared to recess for lunch.

During the recess, a conclave of Advisory Ordained Delegates gathered to determine the three who will serve as Michigan District advisory delegates (ordained) allotted for the 2019 Synod Convention. By general consensus, it was determined the following: Rev. Dr. Theodore Hopkins (Concordia University Ann Arbor), Rev. Charles Schulz (Concordia University Ann Arbor), and Rev. Gerald E. Grimm, EM (Macomb). Rev. Frederick Schmitt (Sterling Heights), and Rev. Dr. Dale

Kleimola (Jackson) were named alternates.

Monday Afternoon Session

Prayer to begin the afternoon session was offered by Mr. George Locke, former Michigan District Superintendent of Schools.

Mr. David Gehm, President and CEO of Wellspring Lutheran Services was accorded opportunity to address the convention. He traced the lengthy human care history of Wellspring back to the Altenheim and Kinderfreund Society of 1897. Although now under a new name, Wellspring currently is celebrating its 125th anniversary year of life-giving renewal to those who thirst for hope. A video illustrating Wellspring's answer to the cries of those in need was also projected.

In reference to a listing of Circuit Visitors (Workbook II, Section 4, page 18) nominated by their respective circuits according to Bylaw 5.2.2 of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, the convention ratified the circuit visitor slate by voice acclamation constituting election. The president also expressed gratitude to all outgoing circuit visitors who were invited to stand in recognition of their service.

Prayer was again offered as elections resumed. The Vice Presidents, having been determined during morning elections, were now ranked. With a second ballot majority of 50.1%, Rev. Mark Brandt was named First Vice President. By a subsequent ballot, Rev. Dean Davenport was named Second Vice President by a 54.7% majority. In the final ranking ballot, Rev. David A. Davis became Third Vice President with a 55.0% majority, in consequence of which Rev. John M. Duerr completes the presidium as Fourth Vice President.

With a second ballot 54.7% majority, Rev. Dr. Justin Rossow was elected Secretary of the Michigan District.

Those elected to the District Board of Directors are as follows:

Metro East Region

Ordained: Rev. Norman Koy (52.7%)
Commissioned: Natalie Haupt – unopposed (100%)
Lay: Stephen Boergert (63.2%)
Lay: Richard Stathakis (54.5%)

West Region

Ordained: Rev. Craig Bickel (65.9%)
Commissioned: Lori Wieneke (55.2%)
Lay: Heather Bigelow – by acclamation
Lay: Dennis Sohn – by acclamation

Church Extension Board of Trustees election results:

Rostered: Rev. Erik K. Cloeter (51.24%)
Laypersons:
David Eberhard (70.9%)
Tim Haberling (73.6%)
Jeffrey Roscoe (60.1%)

Nominating Committee election results:

Metro East Region

Ordained: Rev. Thomas Fischer (61.8%)
Commissioned: Matthew Tschudy – by acclamation.
Layperson: Laura Davis (52.0%)

Metro West Region – each unopposed by acclamation

Ordained: Rev. Andrew Gruenhagen
Commissioned: Matthew Dumann
Layperson: Philip Krauss II

North and East Region – each unopposed by acclamation

Ordained: Rev. Derek Riddle

Commissioned: Stephanie Baarck

Layperson: John Nutzmann

Prior to the election of the West Region ordained member of the Nominating Committee, the chair ruled that candidate Rev. Robert Riggs, in maintaining his residence in the West Region, was eligible despite serving a temporary intentional interim ministry in a different region.

West Region

Ordained: Rev. Thomas Vanderbilt (67.4%)

Commissioned: Luke Esselman (64.9%)

Layperson: William Boice was elected by acclamation.

Following this portion of the elections, the president offered kind remarks to note the completion of a full complement of service terms by District Secretary David Reed. He also noted most warmly those members of the Board of Directors completing lengthy terms of service: Richard Krueger, Ruth Martin, John Raffel, and Dewey Ducharme. Also acknowledged were those completing terms with the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees, and Rev. Randy Johnson departing the board of directors to serve now as Assistant to the President, Congregation Mission and Ministries, North Zone. The completed service of Rev. Donald Neuendorf as a district Second Vice President was also later appropriately noted with thanks.

The convention paused for an afternoon break and was reassembled with the singing of “Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling.”

A video regarding Harbor Hope Ministries and its home at Hope Lutheran Church, St. Ignace, was shown to the convention featuring facilitators Andrew and Sue Eskelinen and Rev. Art and Jody Bode, who stood to be recognized.

President Maier called to the dais Floor Committee #2 (Administration, Structure, & Constitutional Matters) with co-chairmen Rev. Mark Brandt and Rev. David Davis. The convention was directed to the floor resolutions for this committee (ref. Convention Workbook II, Resolutions pages 14-29)

Resolution 2-01: “To Affirm the Renaming and Encourage the Continued Work of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support” was moved and supported by the committee. Receiving no debate, Resolution 2-01 was adopted 97.3%.

Resolution 2-02: The committee altered the resolution name to read “To Memorialize Synod to Revoke Bylaw 2.14.5 on Ecclesiastical Supervision.” Chairman Brandt provided a concise background and then read the resolution which was moved and supported by the committee. Various delegates spoke from the floor both in favor and in opposition. Upon calling of the question, upheld with a 68% majority ending debate, Resolution 2-02 was adopted 74.3%.

Resolution 2-03: Similarly, the committee slightly altered the resolution name to read “To Memorialize Synod to Revoke the Requirement that District Presidents Acquire Approval of the Council of Presidents to License new Licensed Lay Deacons.” Again, various delegates spoke both in favor and in opposition. Upon calling of the question, upheld with a 68% majority ending debate, Resolution 2-03 was adopted 63.2%.

Resolution 2-13A: “To Memorialize Synod to Amend Synodical Bylaw 3.2.4.1 Regarding Term Limits.” Printed copies of the resolution were made available to delegates, and the resolution was read. Continued attention was postponed as the chair invoked orders of the day.

A video presentation was supplied by Lutherans for Life detailing its continued vital work. Rev. Paul Clark was asked to stand and be recognized for his leadership in Lutherans for Life and his passion for the life issue.

As preliminary to the next convention essayist, a video concerning the FiveTwo Network was presented illustrating various FiveTwo initiatives. Thereafter the convention was introduced to essayist, Rev. Bill Woolsey, President of the FiveTwo Network. Urging delegates to envision the future profile of their congregations, he spoke of anticipated changes likely within a generation and then addressed how this may inform the future direction of outreach and ministry. At the conclusion there was brief opportunity for questions.

President Maier called to the dais Floor Committee #1 (Michigan District Targets in Ministry) with its co-chairmen Rev.

Donald Neuendorf and Rev. John Duerr. The convention was directed to the floor resolutions for this committee (ref. Convention Workbook II, Resolutions pages 1-13). Committee members were introduced by name.

Resolution 1-10: “To Commend Wellspring Lutheran Services on its 125th Anniversary.” This was a late resolution from the committee which moved and supported it. With unanimous affirmation of the resolution, the convention stood to sing the Common Doxology.

Resolution 1-01: “To Affirm the Priesthood of All Believers in Christ and Therefore Their Call as Missionaries.” The committee eliminated the words “seek to” in line 41. The resolution was read. It was moved and supported by the committee. Having no speaking, Resolution 1-01 was adopted 91.5%.

In response to a point of order suggesting suspension of the reading of each resolution “Whereas,” the president explained convention tradition of generally reading all resolutions the first day of a convention. Yet the matter was placed before the body. To the question of committees reading only resolves unless a committee felt it necessary to read the full resolution, the convention concurred by 74.3%.

Resolution 1-02: “To Encourage Modeling of Personal Evangelism.” Having read only the resolves, the committee moved adoption. Resolution 1-02 was adopted 90.4%.

Resolution 1-03A: “To Affirm the Validity of the Word and Sacraments.” The committee elected to have the entire resolution presented orally. Corrections were noted both for lines 29 and 50 to add in each case “be it further.” The committee moved adoption. A motion to amend striking lines 20-22 was adopted 61.8%. Debate continued. The committee accepted as a friendly amendment the exchange of the word “belief” in place of the word “teaching” in line 24. Upon the question being called, debate was ended by a 81.4% majority. Resolution 1-03A was adopted as amended 69.9%.

Resolution 1-07: “To Encourage Reading of the Bible.” The committee moved adoption. A friendly amendment was allowed by the committee to insert the words “individual and communal” in two locations: following the word “make” in line 22 and also following the word “making” in line 24. A motion to amend which would strike lines 26-27 was unresolved in lieu of the chair invoking orders of the day.

The convention was granted a brief recess.

Upon return, the convention was presented a video regarding the vibrant ministry of Lutheran schools. Mr. Travis Grulke, Superintendent of Schools, stood to be acknowledged by the delegates.

Floor Committee 2 was returned to the dais to continue its work. Convention attention was again directed to **Resolution 2-13A**. The committee moved adoption. Following debate, Resolution 2-13A was adopted 52.6%.

Resolution 2-04: “To Amend the Church Extension Fund Bylaws to Clarify Commencement of Board Member’s Term, to Reduce the Required Number of Board Meetings, and to Allow Use of Remote Communication at Meetings” was moved by the committee. Resolution 2-04 was adopted 97.2%.

Resolution 2-06: “To Amend the Church Extension Fund Bylaws to Clarify the Purpose and Scope of Entities that CEF May Serve, and to Afford Standard Indemnification to All Persons Serving CEF” was moved by the committee which also agreed to a friendly amendment to add the word “all” following the words “loans and” in line 41 and also to include the words “real and personal, tangible and intangible” following the word “property” also in line 41. Further attention to this resolution would return at the evening session.

Chaplain Steve Hokana, representing LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces, spoke to the convention regarding the vital service and deeply rewarding ministry of military chaplaincy.

Mr. James Sanft, President and CEO of Concordia Plan Services, brought greetings from its board and staff. He spoke of the strong viability and effectiveness of the plans and of the demographics of workers participating in them.

Considering the pace of convention matters yet before it, President Maier announced the addition of an evening session to the agenda. The convention concurred that it would reassemble at 8:00 p.m. Rev. Dr. C. William Hoesman, past district president, led the assembly in a closing prayer.

Before departure from the hall, a special presentation was observed in recognition of the retirement of Rev. Dr. Richard

Wolfram, Assistant to the President for Congregation Mission and Ministries / Stewardship following 19 years in service to the Michigan District. Pastor Wolfram and his wife Judy were invited forward. In recognition of his service, Rev. Daniel Meckes, chairman, and Rev. R. William Roper of the Michigan District Stewardship Committee presented Dr. Wolfram with the John E. Herrmann Award established to recognize faithful stewards in the Michigan District. District Board of Directors chairman Steve Boergert also spoke on behalf of the board. Following a presentation of mementos, Dr. Wolfram responded with appreciative remarks to the assembly.

Monday Evening Special Session

A quorum being declared, the convention resumed for the additional session.

The convention returned to previous debate regarding **Resolution 2-06**. The committee accepted a friendly amendment to add the words “committee members” following the word “trustees” in line 9 of the second page of the resolution. Resolution 2-06 was then adopted 92.1%.

Resolution 2-08: “To Amend the Church Extension Fund Bylaws to Confirm CEF’s Continued and Uninterrupted Operations in the Event that the Michigan District No Longer Exists.” Following a reading of only proposed changes, the committee moved adoption. Resolution 2-08 was adopted 98.0%

(Preliminary to Resolution 2-11) Anticipating the presentation of Resolution 2-11 and following consultation with the convention chair and chairman of Committee 2, delegate Willard “Dewey” Ducharme, in accord with Standing Rule 10, moved to substitute Overture 2-11 “Visitation Circuit Realignment” along with its Attachment (Workbook 1, pages 28-35) in place of Resolution 2-11. The motion was seconded. According to rule, Mr. Ducharme was permitted two minutes to provide rationale. Committee chair Mark Brandt responded with the committee’s rationale not to present the substance of the overture proposal. According to rule, the convention determined by a 58.2% majority to consider the substitute resolution.

Overture 2-11 with its Attachment was therefore before the body for debate. Again, Mr. Ducharme was granted two minutes speaking in support of what was, in effect, a substitute motion despite the fact (not at the time noticed by those attending), that Resolution 2-08 had not as yet been formally moved. One puzzlement occurred when an amendment, suggested as a friendly amendment, left the body unsure who should consider it since the “substitute motion” was not offered by the floor committee. Nevertheless, that amending suggestion was ultimately set aside. Speaking to the substitute motion continued at length. A motion to table indefinitely the substitute motion was made, supported, and adopted 55.6%. Not having received favorable action, the motion to substitute Overture 2-11 in place of the anticipated Resolution 2-11 was effectively ended.

The convention encountered a brief perplexity when the chair indicated the possibility of a substitute motion to submit to the board of directors a charge to develop a process for addressing electoral questions. However, with as yet nothing presently on the floor, any speaking or amendment was premature. The error was recognized, and the committee proceeded with a presentation of the main resolution.

Resolution 2-11: “Affirm Visitation Circuit Alignment” was moved by the committee following the reading of the resolves. The committee approved a friendly amendment which removed lines 26-27 and lines 35-36 from the resolution. A further friendly amendment was accepted by the committee to include as a second resolve (at line 31) the following wording, “Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention charge the Board of Directors to develop a process to keep the circuits in compliance with the Synodical Bylaws.” Following continued debate, the question was called. A vote to end debate was adopted 96.4%. Resolution 2-11 was then adopted as amended 84.8%.

A motion to recess for the evening was made, supported, and adopted. Prayer was offered for the evening.

Tuesday, June 26, 2018

Convention delegates and guests gathered in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity for a Memorial Service in giving thanks and praise for the consecrated lives and service of pastors and teachers of the Michigan District whom the Lord of the church had brought home to heaven during the previous triennium. Rev. Donald O. Neuendorf, Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ann Arbor, offered the memorial sermon based upon Ephesians 1:11–14.

Tuesday Morning Session

Prayer was offered to begin. Then all the members of the District Staff were invited forward, introduced, and gratefully acknowledged by name for their admirable service.

The third essayist of the convention was introduced. Mr. Gary Thies of Mission Central—LCMS World Mission engaged the convention with a spirited call to support not only missions but to carry out the vocation of every Christian to be himself a missionary. With complete emphasis on the centrality of Christ, the mission of the church is to tell about Him and “not be normal” in pursuit of this highest calling and to go into “*all*” the world. These last words of Jesus are Christ’s command, as in John 20:21, spoken directly and vigorously. In consideration of missionaries who must otherwise secure the full obligation of their own mission support, Mission Central has led in undertaking substantive financial provision in support of LCMS World Mission. Mr. Thies spoke with the fervor of a committed layman, sharing stories and pictures of current mission advances and was heartily received by the delegates.

Following a brief recess, the president announced one slight agenda alteration to accommodate the schedule of the synod president. A motion to approve the change was moved, supported, and adopted.

The convention was presented a video regarding Elli’s House, a frontline ministry in Detroit providing temporary shelter for runaway girls and/or young women caught in human trafficking. Founder of Elli’s House, Deb Ellinger, was acknowledged by the convention.

A second video was viewed regarding the outreach of Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST Ministries), which provides repurposed prescription eyewear as but one example of service through their mission teams. Sarah DePriest, Interim Executive Director, was acknowledged by the convention.

Lutheran Heritage Foundation was also represented to the convention through a video regarding the foundation’s international translating and publishing work in 100 languages. Rev. Dr. Matt Heise, Executive Director of LHF, was likewise acknowledged by the convention.

To present a comprehensive capital development report and update on the “*Here We Stand*” campaign, Ray Zavada, Assistant to the President for Development was invited forward to address the convention. As the “*Here We Stand*” campaign director, he restated the four primary campaign initiatives: Church Worker Scholarships; Innovative Missional Ministry; Michigan District Endowment; and International Ministries. All circuit coordinators of the campaign were asked to stand and be acknowledged for their critical role in advancing the campaign locally. The steering committee was also acknowledged. The financial progress of the campaign was reported at 5.5 million dollars in current gifts, pledges, and goals. 4.3 million in funding had been received to date. 131 participating congregations represent 35% of district congregations. The report also indicated current distributed funds and the result of other campaign aspects such as the thousands of participants in the Bible Reformation reading plan for students. The convention also heard from Rev. Robert Appold, who spoke of the campaign impact and its continuation. He also showed a video of clips from the district Reformation service conducted at the Breslin Center, October 15, 2017.

Chairman of the Elections Committee Erik Cloeter returned to the dais for one last election for the LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations. With a second ballot 54.0% majority, Rev. Mark Brandt was elected. A final ballot determined the alternate to be Rev. Stephen Starke with a 56.9% majority.

The Elections Committee was excused with thanks.

Floor Committee 2 was returned to the dais. Chairman Mark Brandt introduced each committee member.

Resolution 2-09: “To Amend the Bylaws of the Michigan District Regarding Nominations for District Board of Directors.” By consensus, only paragraphs with changes were read. The committee moved adoption. The committee approved friendly amendments which noted the omission of the words “eight” and “four” respectively in lines 50 and 8 prior to their digit equivalents. Resolution 2-09 as amended was adopted 97.9%.

Resolution 2-12: “To Consider Voting Privilege for Commissioned Ministers.” The committee changed the resolution title from the printed original and elected to have the entire resolution read. The committee then moved adoption. Following brief debate, the chair, invoking the orders of the day and the urgency of time, requested the body if it had received sufficient information for action upon this resolution. By a 90.8% majority, the body was prepared to vote. Resolution

2-12 was adopted 70.3%.

Jim Saalfeld, CEO of the Michigan District Church Extension Fund was welcomed to the convention. From the dais he utilized a video to outline the changes, growth, and ministry impact of CEF. Subsequently, President John Bates spoke of the fund's financial strength and grants. Paul Wills, Vice President of Marketing, spoke further regarding the mission statement and services of the fund. In conclusion, the team introduced Andrew Sohn, soon to succeed Paul Wills as Vice President of Marketing.

Although he had welcomed delegates the previous day, Rev. Dr. Patrick Ferry was accorded fuller opportunity to address the convention as president of Concordia University. CUAA presently has the distinction of being the fastest growing university in the state of Michigan, anticipating 1,200 students on campus in the coming term. The high proportion of alumni serving as convention delegates was noted. CUAA is "the church's school" with a new nursing program and a dramatically improved and successful collegiate football program which serves as a metaphor for the college. A video was shown demonstrating the "uncommon" character and activity of the university. President Ferry also spoke of the Luther Promise scholarships to promote Lutheran student recruitment and intimated the prospect of a future Maier Center for the promotion of such disciplines as evangelism and apologetics.

The convention recessed for lunch with prayer.

Tuesday Afternoon Session

Mr. Bruce Braun, former Michigan District Superintendent of Schools, led delegates in prayer to begin the final session.

Mr. Steven Meseke, Superintendent of the Lutheran High School Association was welcomed to address the convention. His report considered statistics regarding Lutheran secondary education over the years and stressed the impactful high school years which serve and prepare our maturing students. Where better than a Lutheran High School for this to be done?

Having no omnibus resolutions to consider, two further ministry videos were presented.

Lutheran Special Education Ministries offers academic support and serves families through Christ-centered partnerships in support of children with learning needs. The video featured Stacy Hoeft— President/CEO. She and Richard Schumacher, LSEM Programs & Services Director, and Martin Moro, Director of Program Advancement, were recognized by the chair.

A further video was presented by the Communications Department of the Michigan District outlining its resources (workshop videos, publications, etc.). President Maier expressed thanks to the department for its service to the district.

It was then the privilege of the Michigan District Convention to formally welcome the president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison. President Harrison afforded delegates a thorough and beneficial report which drew from a comprehensive written document distributed to delegates: "Joy: Fully Lutheran: A message to the Church about the challenges we face and how to face them." His report began with a video and then touched on multiple aspects of our present joy and future joyous life together in the church. The Word of God never changes, yet the church responds to exceptional demographic and social changes in the circumstance of widening globalization. The president was candid regarding demographic decline in the synod. Yet he affirmed the future bright despite an array of alleged reasons for this decline. Joy remains ours in declaring and sharing God's Word, in serious study of Scripture and the Confessions, and in responding locally and internationally to human need. There are summits of joy in the synod's expanding missionary reach and impact, in the Concordia University System, in pastoral and diaconal formation, in pastoral and lay visitation, and in so much more. He also spoke of rising hopes of extinguishing the synod's historic indebtedness. The president concluded his report by leading the convention in prayer for the church and its joy in Christ.

In the promotion of comprehensive health, Rev. Daniel Ramthun, chairman of the Michigan District Commission for Church Worker Care was invited to offer brief remarks to the convention.

President Maier also took a moment to acknowledge the presence of Rev. Dr. John Wohlrabe, synod Vice President for the Great Lakes Region, and Rev. Dr. Jon Vieker, Assistant to the President, both of whom have been in attendance at the convention.

Following a brief recess, a video regarding the mission work of the LAMP Ministries, the cross-cultural ministry sharing Jesus Christ with God's people in remote areas of Canada, was shown.

A further video summarizing the work of the Ephphatha Mission Society and ministry to the deaf was presented featuring the work of Rev. Tyler Walworth, a district pastor engaged in deaf ministry.

A group of nine leaders involved in university campus ministry were joined on the dais for a report on their work. Pastor Ben Ulledalen, who serves the campus ministry at Central Michigan University, spoke on their behalf regarding the energetic work also at such other schools as MSU, Eastern Michigan, and Hillsdale as well as CUAA.

Floor Committee 1 was returned for further work on resolutions.

The convention was directed again to **Resolution 1-07**. A previous motion to amend by striking lines 26-27 was deemed a friendly amendment by the committee. The question was called resulting in a 99.1% determination to end debate. Resolution 1-07 was adopted as amended 98.2%.

Resolution 1-05A: “To Affirm the Healthy Relationship Between Unity in Theology and Mission and Diversity in Practice.” Following a reading of the resolves, the committee moved adoption. The question was called following some debate. A 63.0% vote failed in reaching a required 2/3 majority to end debate. Motion to amend was made and supported to strike lines 40-41 (page 1) and lines 21-22 (page 2). Considering the lateness of the hour, the chair sought the will of the convention whether it would discuss the amendment. A majority indicated not by 69.2%, in effect defeating the amendment.

Returning to the main motion, the committee approved a friendly amendment to alter the title and line 21 of the second page by substituting in both locations the words “healthy relationship” in place of the word “tension.” Likewise in line 40 the word “relationship” replaced the word “tension.” Following further speaking, another friendly amendment was accepted by the committee to move the entirety of the resolve beginning at line 50 on the first page and concluding with line 8 on the second page to be the third to last resolve inserted at line 31 of the second page. President Maier, invoking orders of the day, requested of the body whether debate on the present resolution should be ended. A majority vote of 93.6% closed debate. Resolution 1-05A was adopted as amended 83.4%.

Resolution 1-09: “To Commend the Lutheran Heritage Foundation on its 25th Anniversary.” Resolution resolves were read, and the committee moved adoption. Resolution 1-09 was adopted unanimously, the delegates rising to sing the Common Doxology.

Floor Committee 1 was dismissed with thanks as Floor Committee 2 returned for its final business.

Resolution 2-05: “To Amend the Michigan District Bylaws to Clarify Commencement of Board Member’s Terms” was moved for adoption by the committee. Resolution 2-05 was adopted by voice vote.

Resolution 2-07: “To Amend the Michigan District Bylaws to Afford Standard Indemnification to all Persons Serving the Michigan District” was moved for adoption by the committee. Resolution 2-07 was adopted by voice vote.

Floor Committee 1 was dismissed with thanks.

For a presentation regarding Orphan Grain Train, Rev. Ralph Schmidt was invited to the dais. He spoke of the exceptional distribution of Christian and humanitarian aid domestically and to 67 foreign countries in which Orphan Grain Train has relationships. He noted that until now there had been no formal presence of Orphan Grain Train in Michigan. He then announced the recent naming of Rev. David Reed as Branch Manager of a new Orphan Grain Train—Michigan. Current secretary of the district Reed then addressed the convention, supplemented by video visuals, regarding the new warehouse and work center of Orphan Grain Train—Michigan established in Sebewaing.

The Franklin Avenue Mission directed by Rev. Bradley Yops was highlighted by a video delineating the work being energetically done in Flint.

Vice President Brandt assumed the chair and introduced representatives from the two prominent auxiliaries of the synod. First, Susan Gruber, Michigan District President of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League addressed the convention. She enumerated the wonderful work of the league in support of many and various mission projects. The LWML of Michigan in the previous year not only reached but exceeded its district goal. Members soon meet in their own convention.

Mr. Chuck Bennett brought greetings as Michigan District President of the Lutheran Laymen's League. He expressed the league's sense of urgency and joy in continuing the work of LLL Ministries bringing Christ to the nations and the nations to the church. The LLL continues vigorously to engage laity for outreach. The Lutheran Hour has over one million listeners each week, and new technologies open ever-expanding means for distributing Christian content around the world.

A Treasurer's report was presented by Bonnie Mann, District Treasurer. A printed financial report and Financial Statements were provided in Convention Workbook II. The treasurer reviewed the change in funding of the district, pointing out reduction in the traditional funding mechanism of congregations sending funds to the district and the district sending funds to the synod. Since 2001, this type of funding has declined from \$6.4 million to \$4.7 million, a reduction of 27%.

This traditional funding method continues to provide the majority of the district income; however, other income sources are nearing 50% of the district's annual income. These other income sources include gifts, fees, conference/youth gathering fees, sales of property, and investment income. Investment earnings have increased due to the district's Endowment Fund growing to over \$3 million.

The district conveyed 35% of funds received from congregations to the synod during the fiscal year ended 1/31/2018 and has committed \$1,522,500, at the same percentage for the current fiscal year. Mission spending continues to adapt to the Critical Targets and Desired Outcomes established by the board of directors with over \$4.5 million allocated to urban, campus, deaf, and Hispanic work, mission starts, and StartNew ministries over the last triennium.

The district continues to enjoy a strong financial position with a net asset position of \$16.8 million as of January 31, 2018. Of the \$16.8 million, \$11.2 million are restricted by donors, including nearly \$3 million in commitments from congregations for the following year. The district's unrestricted net assets include \$2.75 million in property and equipment, \$1.9 million in board and convention designated funds, and \$900,000 in undesignated reserves. The loan obtained in 2012 for the commitment made by the district to the merger of Concordia University Ann Arbor and Concordia University Wisconsin is expected to be discharged this fiscal year.

Chad Woltemath, Assistant to the President for Business/Finance, provided delegates a review and update on various district properties. He also assured the convention of the district's strong financial reserve position and expressed gratitude for continued financial support of district ministries.

A final attendance report was received from the district secretary.

	Registered	Attendance	
Voting Pastoral Delegates	249	245	
Voting Lay Delegates	252	246	
Total Voting Delegates present		491	(total congregations present: 276)
Advisory Ordained Ministers	49	43	
Advisory Commissioned Ministers	62	54	
Advisory Emeriti	73	66	
Total Advisory Delegates present		163	
Convention Guests			
Emeritus spouse	21	20	
Vicars	1	1	
Ministry tent exhibitors	61	59	
Others	69	65	
Total convention guests present		145	
Total present		799	

Rev. Dean Davenport reported on the convention ingathering designated for Hope Clinic, Ann Arbor. 535 bags of materials and over \$1,000 in gift cards will be delivered to the clinic. A closing convention video from the communications department capped the sessions.

President Maier drew the convention toward its completion with final remarks, thanks in particular to the parliamentarian and secretary, to Rick Krueger for leading delegates in song, to student pages, Rob Kasper, and sponsors for convention events: CUA, Wellspring, CPS, and Messiah Lutheran Church for distributed books. Delegates were also commended for the diligence of their service and for reflecting tremendous unity as those who live as God's saved and sent servants. The president led the convention in prayer.

The 102nd regular Convention of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod was adjourned by Rev. President David P. E. Maier in the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

A Service of Sending and Installation was held in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity at which President Maier offered the sermon and elected officers and board members were duly installed.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David H. Reed
Michigan District Secretary

Resolutions

COMMITTEE NAME: MICHIGAN DISTRICT TARGETS IN MINISTRY
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-01
SUBJECT: To Affirm the Priesthood of All Believers in Christ and Therefore Their Call as Missionaries
REFERENCE: Overture 1-01

WHEREAS, Luther's Small Catechism affirms that no one can "by their own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, or come to Him," but rather "the Holy Spirit calls (each) through the Gospel, enlightens (each) with His gifts, sanctifies and keeps (each) in the true faith," and

WHEREAS, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope states, "Here the words of Christ apply which testify that the keys were given to the church and not merely to certain individuals: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst'" [Matthew 18:20] (Tappert, 331), and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit through St. Peter in 1 Peter 2:9 states that all true believers in Christ are "a royal Priesthood" and again, through St. John in Revelation 5:9-10, that "He (Christ) purchased men (people) for God from every nation and made them a kingdom and priests to serve our God," in fulfillment of His intent as stated in Exodus 19:5-6 (NIV), "Although the whole earth is mine, you will become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," and

WHEREAS, papers have been circulated in our Synod discouraging and prohibiting our laity from witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but rather leave that to the ordained, thereby hindering the Holy and Royal Priesthood of God from carrying out their divine mandate and privilege (Matthew 28:19, 1 Peter 2:4-10), and

WHEREAS, the CTCR opinion (*Is the Gospel Effective When Spoken by a Layperson*, May 2016) is that "The Scriptures are replete with examples of Christian men and women—lay people—who share the saving truths of God's Word with others;" and

WHEREAS, our Lutheran Confessions (AP XIII), when speaking about the Sacraments, also affirm that the priesthood of the Church is not a ministry of "sacrifice" but rather of "proclamation," and further states that the "Priesthood of the New Testament is a ministry of the Spirit" (AP XXIV), and

WHEREAS, the stated purpose of the Holy and Royal Priesthood is "... that you (we) may declare the praises of Him who called you (us) out of darkness into his marvelous light," therefore be it

Resolved, that every baptized believer in Christ be encouraged to fulfill his priestly office and mission of prayer for others and proclamation of the Gospel in their own context, and be it further

Resolved, that those uniquely called to the Office of the Holy Ministry, who serve as pastors in their respective congregations, be encouraged to intentionally train, equip, encourage, and motivate the entire "Priesthood" under their care to more effectively and eagerly serve as a "Kingdom of Priests" in their community and world, and be it further

Resolved, that our congregations and church workers be encouraged to share strategies and best practices of evangelism and contextualized Kingdom expressions of the Gospel through God's priests (e.g. through submissions to the Michigan District's "Story Bucket"), in order to encourage and train others; and be it further

Resolved, that the Michigan District provide online and in-person training opportunities for use in congregations throughout the District, as well as providing access to synodical and other recommended resources, and be it finally

Resolved, that the Michigan District LCMS in convention submit to the 2019 LCMS Convention an overture with the above stated WHEREAS statements and the first three RESOLUTION statements.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: MICHIGAN DISTRICT TARGETS IN MINISTRY
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-02
SUBJECT: To Encourage Modeling of Personal Evangelism
REFERENCE: Overture 1-02

WHEREAS, Jesus sent his disciples into the world be his witnesses (Luke 24:48–49); and

WHEREAS, Jesus declared that His followers would be His witness to “Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8); and

WHEREAS, St. Paul reminds us that we cannot believe in Him whom we’ve not heard. We cannot hear unless someone is sent out to proclaim (Romans 10:14–17); and

WHEREAS, Synod in convention has repeatedly encouraged congregations to place evangelism of the lost as a top priority (1989–To Intensify and Prioritize Mission, RESOLUTION 1-01; 1992–To Accept and Apply Mission Blueprint for the Nineties, RESOLUTION 1-01; 2004–To Affirm Mission 21st Century Response to Great Commission, RESOLUTION 1-01A; 2004–To Promote “Mission Outpost” Attitude, RESOLUTION 1-02); and

WHEREAS, called workers set the example for personal witnessing; and

WHEREAS, congregations can anticipate an increase in guests to their worship services when their staff and members consistently spend time each week cultivating relationships and sharing the faith in the community; and

WHEREAS, pastors and called workers are often limited in their opportunity for personal witnessing by finances and time constraints due to expectations of their ministry; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention affirms the importance of personal witnessing for the salvation of the lost and participation in the Gospel; and be it further

Resolved, that the District provide training and resources to assist called workers and lay leaders in personal witnessing and the promotion of personal witnessing among the members of our congregations; and be it further

Resolved, that congregations be encouraged to demonstrate the priority of personal witnessing by enabling their workers to spend time on a weekly basis in the community; and be it finally

Resolved, That congregations be encouraged to facilitate their pastor’s leadership in witnessing by including funds in their budget to be used at the discretion of the pastor, and when possible, all called workers, to support their efforts for personal witnessing in the community.

ACTION: Adopted

COMMITTEE NAME: MICHIGAN DISTRICT TARGETS IN MINISTRY
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-03A
SUBJECT: To Affirm the Validity of the Word and Sacraments
REFERENCE: Overture 1-03

WHEREAS, for thirty years, concerns have been voiced over the service of Licensed Lay Deacons, whether the Sacrament of the Altar or the public administration of the Sacrament of Baptism administered by a Licensed Lay Deacon (non-ordained) was “valid”, and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Synodical Resolution 6-02 defined a “regular call,” AC XIV, as examination, call, and ordination, and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Synodical Resolution 13-02A authorized Licensed Lay Deacons to consecrate and to distribute the Lord's Supper under the authority of the royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9) in the local congregation, and

WHEREAS, Licensed Lay Deacons are authorized at the request of the local congregation through the office of the District President and sanctioned by the Council of Presidents, and

WHEREAS, the hearts of some believers have been burdened by the false belief that the validity of the sacraments depends on the ordination of the celebrant; therefore be it

Resolved, that we affirm the validity of the sacraments when administered by Licensed Lay Deacons serving in our district, under the supervision of an ordained pastor at the request of the congregation; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the validity of God's Word and Sacraments because they are the Means of God's Grace among us through which His Spirit alone works saving faith and the forgiveness of sins through Christ Jesus, quite apart from the character or position of the man administering them so long as they have been called or appointed to do so by the gathered saints of God in Christ; and be it further

Resolved, that in the instances when the administration of the Word and Sacraments is not done by an ordained pastor, for the sake of good order in the church, communication and counsel should be made with the District President and the Circuit Visitor; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm and give thanks for the divine institution of the Office of the Holy Ministry and give hearty thanks and honor for those who have been ordained (set apart) to serve in that Holy Office; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention submit to the 2019 LCMS Convention an overture with the above stated WHEREAS statements and the following Resolved statements:

Resolved, that we affirm the validity of the sacraments when administered by Licensed Lay Deacons, under the supervision of an ordained pastor at the request of the congregation; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the validity of God's Word and Sacraments because they are the Means of God's Grace among us through which His Spirit alone works saving faith and the forgiveness of sins through Christ Jesus, quite apart from the character or position of the man administering them so long as they have been called or appointed to do so by the gathered saints of God in Christ; and be it further

Resolved, that in the instances when the administration of the Word and Sacraments is not done by an ordained pastor, for the sake of good order in the church, communication and counsel should be made with the District President and the Circuit Visitor; and be it finally

Resolved, that we affirm and give thanks for the divine institution of the Office of the Holy Ministry and give hearty thanks and honor for those who have been ordained (set apart) to serve in that Holy Office.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME:	MICHIGAN DISTRICT TARGETS IN MINISTRY
RESOLUTION NUMBER:	1-05A
SUBJECT:	To Affirm the Relationship Between Unity in Theology and Mission and Diversity in Practice
REFERENCE:	Overture 1-05

WHEREAS, St. Paul affirms the need for the Gospel to remain unaltered and uncompromised in 1 Corinthians 15 and Galatians 1:9; and

WHEREAS, our church body was organized around the common confession of faith from Scripture as it has been articulated in the Unaltered Book of Concord; and

WHEREAS, St. Paul reminds us that faith comes from hearing the Word of the Lord (Romans 10:17); and

WHEREAS, St. Paul teaches us by His example to proclaim the Word of the Lord in a manner consistent with the cultural context of the lost, saying in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23: “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings;” and

WHEREAS, our Lutheran Confessions’ affirmed true unity in theology is not dependent upon unity in practice: “It is sufficient for the true unity of the Christian church that the Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance with the divine Word. It is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian church that ceremonies, instituted by men, should be observed uniformly in all places” (AC VII); and

WHEREAS, our Lutheran Confessions also affirm the congregation’s right to adapt its practices “as at any time may seem to be most profitable, beneficial, and salutary for good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the edification of the church” (SD X); and

WHEREAS, our church body has debated numerous resolutions in convention that have sought to reconcile the tension between maintaining purity of doctrine and Christian freedom of practice; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention affirms the value of living in a healthy relationship between maintaining purity of doctrine and Christian freedom of practice; and be it further

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention affirms the importance of maintaining unity among us by being diligent to hold steadfast to Scriptures and the Confessions; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the need and right for each congregation and school to adapt outreach techniques and teaching styles to most effectively communicate the unchanging Gospel message within its cultural context without compromising purity of doctrine; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the synodical resolution 4-04A, 2016 which states the following:

That the LCMS in convention appeal to the congregations of the Synod for love’s sake (Philemon 9), when celebrating the Lord’s Supper, to regularly use these basic components of the Order of Service (Ordo): to gather in the triune name, confess our sins and receive Absolution, praise the blessed Trinity, attend to the reading and the proclamation of God’s Holy Word, confess our faith using the historic creeds, offer prayers for all people according to their needs including praying the Lord’s Prayer, celebrate the Lord’s Supper with Christ’s own words, and then depart with God’s blessing to send us forth as His forgiven children and witnesses to His grace; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the freedom that is ours in Christ for each congregation to adapt the music and liturgy in worship without compromising purity of doctrine to fit the culture of the saints who gather for worship; and be it further

Resolved, that we celebrate the unity that is ours by the Holy Spirit through a common confession and encourage, support, and celebrate the freedom in practice that is ours in Christ Jesus; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention submit to the 2019 LCMS Convention an overture with the above stated WHEREAS statements and the following Resolved statements:

Resolved, that the LCMS in convention affirm the value of living in a healthy relationship between maintaining purity of doctrine and Christian freedom of practice; and be it further

Resolved, that the LCMS in convention affirm the importance of maintaining unity among us by being diligent to hold steadfast to Scriptures and the Confessions; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the need and right for each congregation and school to adapt outreach techniques and teaching styles to most effectively communicate the unchanging Gospel message within its cultural context without compromising purity of doctrine; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the synodical resolution 4-04A, 2016 which states the following:

That the LCMS in convention appeal to the congregations of the Synod for love's sake (Philemon 9), when celebrating the Lord's Supper, to regularly use these basic components of the Order of Service (Ordo): to gather in the triune name, confess our sins and receive Absolution, praise the blessed Trinity, attend to the reading and the proclamation of God's Holy Word, confess our faith using the historic creeds, offer prayers for all people according to their needs including praying the Lord's Prayer, celebrate the Lord's Supper with Christ's own words, and then depart with God's blessing to send us forth as His forgiven children and witnesses to His grace; and be it further

Resolved, that we affirm the freedom that is ours in Christ for each congregation to adapt the music and liturgy in worship without compromising purity of doctrine to fit the culture of the saints who gather for worship; and be it further

Resolved, that we celebrate the unity that is ours by the Holy Spirit through a common confession and encourage, support, and celebrate the freedom in practice that is ours in Christ Jesus.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: MICHIGAN DISTRICT TARGETS IN MINISTRY
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-07
SUBJECT: To Encourage Reading of the Bible
REFERENCE: Overture 1-07

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches us the way of salvation (John 20:30–31) and unleashes God's power (Romans 1:16; Isaiah 55:10–11); and

WHEREAS, the entirety of the Bible is valuable for Christian growth (2 Timothy 3:16–17); and

WHEREAS, the recent Here We Stand campaign provided a fruitful call to Bible reading through the Reformation Reading Plan as part of the celebration of our Reformation heritage; and

WHEREAS, Bible reading is essential for developing Christian discipleship and a zeal to reach others with the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, the discipline of reading through the Bible is best established at a young age; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Michigan District in Convention gives thanks to God for the Scriptures and the increased reading of them through the efforts of the Here We Stand Campaign; and be it further

Resolved, that all congregations are called upon to make individual and communal reading through the Scriptures a central accent of their congregation's discipleship training; and be it finally

Resolved, that our congregations are encouraged to concentrate on making individual and communal reading through the Scriptures a key aspect of their youth and family ministries.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: MICHIGAN DISTRICT TARGETS IN MINISTRY
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-09
SUBJECT: To Commend the Lutheran Heritage Foundation on its 25th Anniversary
REFERENCE: Overture 1-09

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) founded on November 10, 1992; and

WHEREAS, many Lutheran churches around the world do not have the books vital to understanding the Lutheran faith because no one had translated them into their language. LHF is working to change that; and

WHEREAS, in more than 90 countries and 100 languages, thousands of people have come to faith in Christ because they have been able to read books that include the Book of Concord (12 translations), Luther's Small Catechism (86 translations), and A Child's Garden of Bible Stories (29 translations) in their own language; and

WHEREAS, in the past decade, LHF has published and distributed more than 925 titles in 102 languages with many more in progress; and

WHEREAS, over 3 million Lutheran books have been distributed to pastors, seminary students, missionaries and churches—at no cost to them; therefore be it

Resolved, that congregations join in giving thanks and celebrating what the Lord has done, from the humble beginnings in Dr. Robert Rahn's basement to its worldwide expansion; and be it further

Resolved, that the Michigan District encourage congregations of the district to set aside November 10, 2018 to celebrate the work of LHF by offering prayers and financial support; and be it further

Resolved, that the convention memorialize Synod in 2019 to give thanks for the ministry of LHF and encourage support; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention with thanksgiving to God for the ministry of LHF stand and sing the Common Doxology.

ACTION: Adopted

COMMITTEE NAME: MICHIGAN DISTRICT TARGETS IN MINISTRY
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-10
SUBJECT: To Commend Wellspring Lutheran Services on its 125th Anniversary

WHEREAS, God's Word often encourages the faithful to care for the widow and the orphan and all in need; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Homes of Michigan began with the opening of the Lutheran Home in Monroe in 1893 to serve the aged and the ill, and the Evangelical Lutheran Michigan Children's Friend Society began in 1899 to serve the orphaned; and

WHEREAS, these ministries were combined in the Wellspring Lutheran Services to serve the young and old, and to meet the needs of people in a variety of circumstances with the love of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, these two blessed organizations have faithfully served God's Church and the people of the Michigan District for 125 years; therefore be it

Resolved, that the congregations of the district be encouraged to support this vital ministry; and be it further

Resolved, that the congregations of the district be encouraged to give thanks to God for this faithful ministry that reveals the love of Christ; and be it finally

Resolved, that the district in convention celebrate God's gifts given through Wellspring Lutheran Services by rising to sing the Common Doxology.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-01
SUBJECT: To Affirm the Renaming and Encourage the Continued Work of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support
REFERENCE: Overture 2-02

WHEREAS, the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support (CMGS) was established to serve as an extension of the Office of the District President; and

WHEREAS, the CMGS was so named to be in alignment with a similar commission under the President of Synod; and

WHEREAS, the synodical Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support has disbanded and its responsibilities have been absorbed into the Office of National Mission; and

WHEREAS, the CMGS in the Michigan District continues to serve the important function of encouraging and educating both congregations and church workers toward greater spiritual, emotional, relational, physical, and financial health, and interacts with synod-wide health and wellness programs and coordinates with other districts of Synod; and

WHEREAS, congregations and ministries of the Michigan District have a wide variety of ordained, commissioned, and lay workers who serve faithfully and need encouragement and education for greater overall health; and

WHEREAS, an appropriate name change for the Commission would better describe its task and the scope of its task; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support be renamed as the Commission for Church Worker Care; and be it further

Resolved, that the Commission for Church Worker Care be commended for its faithful work of encouragement and education toward greater overall health of church workers, whatever their role in ministry; and be it finally

Resolved, that congregations and ministries of the Michigan District be encouraged to establish their own committee for church worker care and make use of the educational materials and programs provided through the Michigan District's Commission for Church Worker Care in an effort to encourage and increase the overall health of all those who serve as workers in their midst.

ACTION: Adopted

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-02
SUBJECT: To Memorialize Synod to Revoke Synodical Bylaw 2.14.5 on Ecclesiastical Supervision
REFERENCE: Overtures 2-04, 2-05

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Synod indicates: “The officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod” (Art. XI A1); and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Synod defines the scope of the ecclesiastical supervision of the President of the Synod as the officers of the Synod, all such as are employed by the Synod, the individual districts of the Synod, and all district presidents (Art. XI B1); and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Synod defines the scope of the ecclesiastical supervision of district presidents as the ordained and commissioned ministers of their districts (Art. XII 7) and entrusts them with the power to suspend ordained and commissioned members from membership in the Synod (Art. XII 8); and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) has affirmed the sole responsibility of the District Presidents for ecclesiastical supervision of members in their respective districts (Opinions Ag. 1970, 13-2669); and

WHEREAS, the 2004 LCMS Convention amended the bylaws to eliminate the possibility of an accuser appealing a complaint that has been terminated by a district president to the Praesidium of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, the LCMS Board of Directors, following the 66th Regular LCMS Convention held in Milwaukee, Wisc., amended the bylaws to provide opportunity for an accuser to appeal to the President of the Synod if the District President does not suspend a member of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Bylaw 2.14.5 was added outside of a Synod Convention, contrary to Article XIV of the Synod’s Constitution which provides that “The Synod in convention may adopt bylaws that are consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod, which controls and supersedes such bylaws and other rules and regulations of the Synod;” and

WHEREAS, Article XIV of the Synod’s Constitution makes binding only those bylaws “adopted, revised, or eliminated by a simple majority vote of a national convention” and not bylaws adopted by any subset of the Synod, such as the Board of Directors of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Bylaw 2.14.5 is in conflict with the Constitution of the Synod Article XI B1; and

WHEREAS, the existing LCMS Handbook now exposes the accused worker to the undue burden of defending himself/herself repeatedly; therefore be it

Resolved, that the 2019 LCMS Convention be memorialized to remove Bylaw 2.14.5; and be it further

Resolved, that the 2019 LCMS Convention reaffirm the method of ecclesiastical supervision adopted in the Bylaw changes by the 2004 convention.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-03
SUBJECT: To Memorialize Synod to Revoke the Requirement that District Presidents Acquire Approval of the Council of Presidents to License New Licensed Lay Deacons
REFERENCE: Overture 2-06

WHEREAS, 2016 Synod Convention Resolution 13-02A enabled many Licensed Lay Deacons (LLD) to become Specific Ministry Pastors by colloquy, and removed the LLD designation from many who did not fit the description, and allowed LLDs to continue to be licensed and deployed when the needs of congregations and availability of men to serve them requires it; and

WHEREAS, Res. 13-02A requires that district presidents license men as LLDs only with the approval of the national body of the Council of Presidents (COP); and

WHEREAS, this new requirement adds an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy and increases the volume of paperwork and meeting time for individual district presidents as well as the COP; and

WHEREAS, this requirement moves ministry decisions further from local congregation ministry than necessary or desirable; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention submit to the 2019 LCMS Convention an overture with the above stated WHEREAS statements and the following Resolved statement:

Resolved, that the 2019 Synodical Convention revoke the Res. 13-02A requirement that district presidents must acquire the approval of the Council of Presidents to license new Licensed Lay Deacons.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-04
SUBJECT: To Amend the Church Extension Fund Bylaws to Clarify Commencement of Board Member's Terms, to Reduce the Required Number of Board Meetings, and to Allow Use of Remote Communication at Meetings
REFERENCE: 2-07

WHEREAS, the Church Extension Fund of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (“CEF”) is governed by a Board of Trustees (the “Board”) comprised of nine elected members (the “Trustees”); and

WHEREAS, CEF desires to modify or clarify provisions of its Bylaws to increase interest in service as a Trustee of the Board, and to enhance participation in Board meetings; and

WHEREAS, CEF desires to clarify that Trustees elected at a Michigan District Convention are not required to attend an installation ceremony at such Convention as the elected Trustees may not be present at such Convention; and

WHEREAS, CEF desires to reduce the number of mandated annual Board meetings from six to four to better address the actual operational needs of CEF; and

WHEREAS, CEF desires to allow Trustees or members of a committee designated by the Board (a “Committee”) to participate in meetings by way of telephone conference or other means of remote communication; therefore be it

Resolved, that the “Membership” and “Meetings” sections of CEF’s Bylaws be amended in the following manner [deleted words stricken and new language underlined for reference]:

II. MEMBERSHIP

The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall consist of nine (9) elected trustees.

5. All trustees elected at the Convention ~~shall be inducted into office in an installation ceremony at the Convention and~~ shall begin their terms of office on the first of October following ~~induction~~ election.

IV. MEETINGS

1. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall schedule regular meetings as the business of the Board shall require, but not less than ~~six~~ four times per year.

* * *

5. A member of the Church Extension Board of Trustees or of a committee designated by said board may participate in a meeting by means of telephone conference or other means of remote communication if all individuals who are participating in the meeting can communicate with the other participants.

ACTION: Adopted

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-05
SUBJECT: To Amend the Michigan District Bylaws to Clarify Commencement of Board Member's Terms

WHEREAS, the Michigan District in convention desires to clarify that Officers and Directors elected at a Michigan District Convention are not required to attend an installation ceremony at such Convention as the elected Officers and Directors may not be present at such Convention; therefore be it

Resolved, that the "Elections" section of the Michigan District's Bylaws be amended in the following manner [deleted words stricken and new language underlined for reference]:

Article V – ELECTIONS

5.18 a. All officers and directors elected at the convention shall be inducted into their respective offices in an installation ceremony (service) at the convention. Failure to hold the ceremony or the unavailability of inductees to attend the ceremony in person does not affect the time at which the inductees assume office.

ACTION: Adopted

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-06
SUBJECT: To Amend the Church Extension Fund Bylaws to Clarify the Purpose and Scope of Entities that CEF May Serve, and to Afford Standard Indemnification to All Persons Serving CEF
REFERENCE: 2-08

WHEREAS, the Church Extension Fund of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ("CEF") has been blessed with financial resources to be used to extend the Kingdom to many organizations as outlined in the "Purpose" section of CEF's Bylaws; and

WHEREAS, CEF desires to clarify the "Administration" section of its Bylaws to ensure that there is no confusion

regarding the purpose and scope of entities that CEF may serve; and

WHEREAS, CEF's purpose is described in Section 1 of its Bylaws, which states: "The purpose of the Church Extension Fund is to administer a fund and acquire assets to assist by loans, grants, or otherwise, primarily to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, congregations of the Michigan District, individuals serving as professional church workers within the Michigan District, LCMS schools and colleges, entities and associations qualifying as Michigan District recognized service organizations, entities and associations qualifying as Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod recognized service organizations, and entities owned and/or operated by member congregations. The Church Extension Fund may also assist other LCMS Districts, through their respective Church Extension Funds, by purchasing or participating, in whole or in part, in loans or investments, of other LCMS Districts or the Lutheran Church Extension Fund of the LCMS. The purpose for which funds and assistance may be provided shall include, but not limited to, acquiring property, erecting buildings, purchasing equipment, acquiring housing and supporting projects and the operations of the above. The primary purpose, however, of the Church Extension Fund shall be to contribute to the ministry and purposes of the Michigan District and its member congregations," and

WHEREAS, CEF also desires to clarify that all persons serving CEF (trustees, officers, employees, volunteers, etc.) are afforded the standard legal protection of indemnification consistent with Michigan law; therefore be it

Resolved, that the "Administration" section of CEF's Bylaws is hereby amended as follows [deleted words stricken and new language underlined for reference]:

V. ADMINISTRATION

1. The Church Extension Fund may, in its corporate name, take, hold and manage all property, real and personal, notes, bonds, mortgages, land contracts, leases, evidences of indebtedness, loans and all property real and personal, tangible and intangible and assets devised, bequeathed, transferred, leased, or conveyed to ~~them~~ the Church Extension Fund absolutely or in trust for the use and benefit of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ~~by whose representative body they are elected~~ for the purposes outlined in Section 1 of these Bylaws.

* * *

9. The corporation, ~~by adoption of a resolution in accordance with its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and pursuant to the provisions of Public Act 170 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1987, shall, to the fullest extent permitted under Michigan law, have the power to~~ indemnify those persons serving in the position of, or at the request of the corporation, as director, officer, trustee, committee member, employee, or agent against expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by a person in connection with any actions, suits, or proceedings, formal or informal, relating to the service of said individual on behalf of the corporation if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the corporation or its members, or with respect to any criminal action or proceeding if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct engaged in was unlawful. The corporation, through its Board of Trustees, shall have such further or other authority to indemnify trustees, committee members, officers, employees, or agents consistent with the provisions of Michigan law ~~and specifically consistent with the provisions of Public Act 170, Michigan Public Acts of 1987.~~

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-07
SUBJECT: To Amend the Michigan District Bylaws to Afford Standard Indemnification to all Persons Serving the Michigan District

WHEREAS, the Michigan District in convention desires to clarify that all persons serving the Michigan District

(directors, officers, employees, volunteers, etc.) are afforded the standard legal protection of indemnification consistent with Michigan law; therefore be it

Resolved, that the “Indemnification” section of the Michigan District’s Bylaws is hereby amended as follows [deleted words stricken and new language underlined for reference]:

ARTICLE XV – INDEMNIFICATION

15.4 The corporation, ~~by adoption of a resolution in accordance with its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and pursuant to the provisions of Public Act 170 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1986, shall, to the fullest extent permitted under Michigan law, have the power to~~ indemnify those persons serving in the position of, or at the request of the corporation as director, officer, trustee, committee member, commission member, employee, or agent against expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by a person in connection with any actions, suits or proceedings, formal or informal, relating to the service of said individual on behalf of the corporation if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the corporation or its members, or with respect to any criminal action or proceeding if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct engaged in was unlawful. The corporation, through its Board of Directors, shall have such further or other authority to indemnify directors, officers, employees, or agents consistent with the provisions of Michigan law ~~Public Acts 170, Michigan Public Acts of 1987.~~

ACTION: Adopted

COMMITTEE NAME:	ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER:	2-08
SUBJECT:	To Amend the Church Extension Fund Bylaws to Confirm CEF’s Continued and Uninterrupted Operations in the Event that the Michigan District No Longer Exists
REFERENCE:	Overture 2-09

WHEREAS, the primary purpose of Church Extension Fund of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (“CEF”) is to contribute to the ministry and purpose of the Michigan District and its member congregations; and

WHEREAS, CEF is a Michigan church trustee corporation duly authorized under the laws of Michigan, separate and distinct from the legal entity known as the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (the “Michigan District”); and

WHEREAS, despite its separate existence from the Michigan District and its ability to serve the congregations that are currently members of the Michigan District, CEF’s Bylaws do not contemplate continuing operations in the event that the Michigan District no longer exists (e.g., Synodical reorganization, regionalization, decentralization, etc.); and

WHEREAS, the elimination of the Michigan District could therefore jeopardize the ongoing operations of CEF, including more than 15,000 investor accounts and 500 loans; and

WHEREAS, CEF desires to enhance its Bylaws to allow for the continued and uninterrupted operation of CEF in the event that the Michigan District no longer exists; therefore be it

Resolved, that the “Relationship to the Michigan District” section of CEF’s Bylaws is hereby amended to add the following new subsection 3 [new language underlined for reference]:

I. RELATIONSHIP TO THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT

1. The Church Extension Fund shall be subject to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Michigan District of the

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod insofar as said Constitution and Bylaws do not conflict with the laws of the State of Michigan.

- 2. In the event of the dissolution of the Church Extension Fund as a Michigan Church Trustee Corporation, all property and assets to which it holds title, or over which it has control, shall be transferred forthwith to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or to its nominee.
- 3. In the event that the Michigan District no longer exists, then references to the “Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” or the “Michigan District” in these Bylaws, and references to actions thereof, shall be deemed to mean, respectively, the congregations that comprised the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and their actions in convention or at a meeting of such congregations.

ACTION: Adopted

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
 RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-09
 SUBJECT: To Amend the Bylaws of the Michigan District Regarding Nominations for District Board of Directors
 REFERENCE: 2-03

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 4.7.1 states that “Each district may adopt regulations for the nomination and election of its president; the nomination, selection, election, ranking, and succession in case of vacancies of its vice-presidents; and the nomination or selection of any regional officers or regional board of directors members, as long as these provisions do not conflict with the Bylaws of the Synod,” and

WHEREAS, the 2015 Convention of the Michigan District amended the District’s Bylaws to remove its nominating committee from the nominating process for regional Board of Directors positions, in order to comply with Synod’s Bylaws as they stood, and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod amended Synod Bylaw 4.7.2 to allow nominating committees to be employed in the election of regional Board of Directors positions, and

WHEREAS, the District’s nominating committee has been helpful in developing Board of Directors slates in the past, especially in providing for the re-nomination of incumbent Board members who are eligible for another term, therefore be it

Resolved, that Michigan District Bylaws 5.5, 5.6 and 5.13 be amended as follows:

5.5 Time of Elections.

- a. The election of the President, the vice-presidents, the Secretary, approximately one-half of the Board of Directors, and the ratification of the circuit visitors shall take place at each District convention. At alternate conventions a District member shall be elected to serve on the LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations.
- b. Regional assemblies shall nominate for all positions with the exception of President, Secretary, Treasurer, ~~the Board of Directors~~ and the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees.
- c. At their regional assemblies prior to the convention held in even-numbered years, the Metro East Region and the West Region shall ~~nominate~~ narrow the slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.
- d. At their regional assemblies prior to the convention held in odd-numbered years, the Metro West Region and the North and East Region shall ~~nominate~~ narrow the slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.

5.6 Nominating Committee

- a. The District convention shall elect a 12-member Nominating Committee consisting of one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister, and one (1) layperson from each region of the District and the President shall designate the Chairman thereof. The three committee members from each region shall serve as the regional nominating committee.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall meet at the call of the Secretary.
- c. The regional nominating committee shall draw up from its region a list of candidates and alternates for the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee in accordance with the provisions of Michigan District Bylaws 5.6, ~~and 5.7, and 5.13~~ and the Schedule of Elections. The regional nominating committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, as well as biographical data, and supply the regional assembly with this information. Following the regional nominations, the biographical data of persons nominated shall be transferred to the District Nominating Committee so that the District ballot may be drawn up.
- d. The District Nominating Committee shall draw up a list of candidates and alternates for ~~all other District offices, namely, the Secretary and the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees.~~ The Nominating Committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, and transmit its final report to the Secretary no later than three (3) months before the convention. This report shall contain the occupation or profession, residency, and specific experience and qualifications for the proposed office.
- e. The Chairman or his designate shall submit the committee's report to the District convention.
- f. If between the regional assembly and the District convention a nominee becomes ineligible for election, the Elections Committee will fill the vacancy on the ballot with the person who received the next-highest number of votes.
- g. The convention shall have the right to alter the ballot by amendment. The amendment procedure shall include a motion, a second, and a majority vote on the amendment. Any delegate making a nomination for the floor shall have secured prior written consent and biographical data from the candidate whom he wishes to nominate as detailed in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 c. & d. This material shall then be submitted to the District Secretary.
- h. The Chairman shall have on hand at the convention a reserve list of nominees, approved by his committee, for use if required if a new board is to be elected. Whenever possible, however, the committee on nominations should be informed in advance if any new board is likely to be elected at a District convention, so that it may have a slate of candidates in readiness.

5.13 Nominations of Board of Directors.

- a. Every voting congregation of a region nominating for the Board of Directors may nominate one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister and two (2) laypersons from its region for consideration as potential candidates by the regional nominating committee, which may consider additional candidates as it sees fit. (Cf. Bylaw 5.5 c. & d. for the nominating schedule.)
- b. The nominations shall be submitted to the Secretary Nominating Committee no later than four (4) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- c. The Secretary Nominating Committee shall ~~notify each nominee, secure his approval in writing, and secure biographical information for the inclusion of the~~ prepare a slate of up to four (4) ordained ministers, four (4) commissioned ministers, and eight (8) laypersons ~~receiving the most nominations on for the regional nominating ballot in accordance with Bylaw 5.6 c.~~
- d. At the regional assemblies each region shall choose by ballot two (2) ordained ministers, two (2) commissioned ministers, and four (4) laypersons from the slate prepared by the regional nominating committee as nominees for

election by the District convention.

e. Each voting delegate in the region may vote for two (2) ordained minister nominees, two (2) commissioned minister nominees, and four (4) layperson nominees. The two (2) ordained ministers, two (2) commissioned ministers, and four (4) laypersons receiving the largest number of votes shall be candidates. The tellers shall report the results of the meeting to the chairman.

f. The chairman of the regional assemblies shall report to the Secretary the names of the persons nominated for the Board of Directors, along with the biographical data. The Secretary shall transmit such names to the Floor Committee on Elections.

g. The Committee on Elections shall recap the information provided on qualifications and experience for each candidate and shall submit such information together with the ballot on which such election is to take place.

h. The convention shall have the right to alter the slate at the proper time by majority amendment as outlined in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 g. and be it finally

Resolved, that these amendments take effect following the 2018 Convention of the Michigan District.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-11
SUBJECT: Affirm Visitation Circuit Alignment
REFERENCE: Overture 2-11

WHEREAS, according to Synodical Bylaw 5.1.1, and confirmed by the Visitation Circuit Realignment Task Force in the Attachment for Overture 2-11 Rationale, “A visitation circuit is a network of congregations that ‘walks together’ for mutual care, support, advice, study, ecclesiastical encouragement, service, coordination, resources, and counsel—all for the sake of greater congregational participation in God’s mission;” and

WHEREAS, visitation circuits also serve as the structure for representation at national conventions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. As noted in Synodical Bylaw 3.1.2,

(a) An electoral circuit shall consist either of one or two adjacent visitation circuits, as shall be determined by the district board of directors on the basis of the following requirements: each pair of delegates shall represent from 7 to 20 member congregations, involving an aggregate confirmed membership ranging from 1,500 to 10,000.

(c) Voting delegates shall consist of one pastor and one layman from each electoral circuit; and

WHEREAS, laudable effort was given to provide a plan that increased the number of electoral circuits for greater representation at Synodical conventions, but that plan would have caused too great of disruption with existing networks of congregations and ministries; and

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention commend the Visitation Circuit Realignment Task Force for their work; and be it further

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention charge the Board of Directors to develop a process to keep the circuit in compliance with the Synodical bylaws; and be it finally

Resolved, that existing circuit alignment is affirmed and retained in support of ongoing and future commitment to Living as God’s Saved and Sent Servants.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-12
SUBJECT: To Consider Voting Privilege for Commissioned Ministers
REFERENCE: Overture 2-13, 2-14

WHEREAS, called Commissioned Ministers have a critical ministry impacting the lives of families as an outreach arm of congregations; and

WHEREAS, Commissioned Ministers are highly valued for their zeal and faithfulness; and

WHEREAS, all Commissioned Ministers are theologically trained; and

WHEREAS, the LCMS requires Commissioned Ministers to attend District Conventions as Advisory Delegates, whose only authority is to speak to the Convention; and

WHEREAS, districts are expected to appoint a representative number of Commissioned Ministers to represent the District at the LCMS Convention as Advisory Delegates, whose only authority is to speak to the Convention; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Synod in Convention voted 921 to 58 “To Allow Voting Privilege for Assistant Pastors” (Res. 11-09), thus indicating a willingness for the LCMS to reconsider the rigid restrictions placed on voting privilege; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention submit to the 2019 LCMS Convention an overture with the above stated WHEREAS statements and the following Resolved statement:

Resolved, that a discussion regarding the voting privilege for Commissioned Ministers begin at the 2019 Synodical Convention with a decision reached by the 2022 Synodical Convention.

ACTION: Adopted as amended

COMMITTEE NAME: ADMINISTRATION, STRUCTURE, & CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-13A
SUBJECT: To Memorialize Synod to Amend Synodical Bylaw 3.2.4.1 Regarding Term Limits
REFERENCE: 2-01

WHEREAS, in many of our districts throughout Synod, District Presidents are term limited; and

WHEREAS, offices of presidents in districts are not called nor biblically mandated, but rather elected as our governance structure; and

WHEREAS, there’s an optimal balance between experience in office and healthy turnover in office, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention submit to the 2019 LCMS Convention an overture with the above stated WHEREAS statements and the following Resolved statement:

Resolved, that Synod be memorialized to amend Synodical bylaw 3.2.4.1 as follows: The office of President, the first Vice-President, regional vice-presidents, and Secretary shall be ~~without limitation~~ limited to four 3-year terms as to reelection.

ACTION: Adopted

BYLAWS
THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT
OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
(As Amended by the 2018 Michigan District Convention, June 24-26, 2018.)

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

- 1.1** The Michigan District shall consist of congregations, ministers of religion (ordained and commissioned), holding membership in the Synod received by the District or the Synod.
- 1.2** The District shall establish an organizational structure for the effective operation of its program and conduct of its affairs, which structure shall embrace the convention, regional assemblies, the Board of Directors, circuits, and such other entities, boards, commissions, and committees as may from time to time be established.
- 1.3** The District shall be administered through four (4) levels of organization:
- a.** The convention is the meeting of the voting member congregations represented by their delegates.
 - b.** The regional assemblies shall meet prior to the District convention, at which time delegates shall consist of the regularly elected and certified delegates of said regions (Cf. Bylaw 2.3).
 - c.** The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the overall policy and affairs of the District subject to the Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of Synod, and to these Bylaws and the resolutions of the District in convention.
 - d.** The circuits shall carry out resolutions of the Synod and the District and engage in the objectives of the Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 1.3.6).

ARTICLE II - CONVENTIONS

- 2.1** District conventions shall be held and conducted as prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod.
- 2.2** The convention shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or the Bylaws of Synod.
- 2.3** Representation - The District convention shall be composed of regularly elected and certified delegates and of certain individual persons, as follows (Cf. Synod Bylaw 4.2.2):
- a.** Delegates of congregations entitled to vote. Every congregation or parish is entitled to two (2) votes, one (1) of which is to be cast by the pastoral delegate and the other by the lay delegate.
 - b.** The advisory members of the Synod (Constitution, Art. V B).
 - c.** Advisory representatives of the Board of Directors, other boards, commissions, and educational institutions and such as by virtue of their office are required to attend District conventions.
- 2.4** Quorum - To conduct business, a convention must have present at least one-third of the voting member congregations represented by at least one of their respective voting representatives (pastor or lay delegate) (Cf. Constitution XII.14).

ARTICLE III – REGIONS AND REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES

- 3.1** There shall be four (4) regions within the Michigan District.
- 3.2** Regions shall consist of a group of circuits created, aligned, and/or realigned by convention resolution.

- 3.3** Regional assemblies shall meet no later than 45 days prior to the convention of the Michigan District. The date shall be communicated to congregations no later than 30 days prior to the regional assembly. The regional vice-president shall call and chair the assembly of his region at a place of his choosing.
- 3.4** The regional assembly shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.
- 3.5** Each voting member congregation or parish is entitled to be represented at this assembly by two of their respective voting delegates (one pastor and one layperson) and by their advisory members of Synod (Cf. Bylaw 2.3).
- 3.6** The chair shall appoint a secretary to record the proceedings.
- 3.7** At least one-third of the voting member congregations represented by at least one of their respective representatives (pastor or lay delegate) shall be present to conduct a meeting of the regional assembly (Cf. Constitution XII.14).
- 3.8** The purpose of the regional assembly shall be:
- a. To be informed about major issues to come before the District convention;
 - b. To nominate from its region two (2) ministers of religion – ordained for the office of vice-president in accordance with the provisions of Bylaw 5.10 and candidates for the Board of Directors in accordance with the provisions of Bylaw 5.13.
 - c. To nominate from its region, using a slate prepared by the regional nominating committee, the District Nominating Committee (Cf. Bylaw 5.5 c & d).

ARTICLE IV - QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

- 4.1** Officers and board members shall meet all qualifications established from time to time by the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and such other qualifications as may be established from time to time by these Bylaws.
- 4.2** Officers and members of the Board of Directors must be members in good standing of congregations which are members of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, except as noted in Michigan District Bylaw 5.11a. No congregation of the District shall have more than one (1) member from its congregation as a voting member of the Board of Directors to the District.

ARTICLE V - ELECTIONS

- 5.1** Officers.
- a. Elective Officers. The elective officers of the District shall be the President, one vice-president from each region, a Secretary, and the circuit visitors.
 - b. Appointive Officer. The Board of Directors, in consultation with the President, shall appoint the Treasurer.
- 5.2** The elective board of the District shall be the Board of Directors.
- 5.3** Term of Officers and Board of Directors' Members.
- a. The term of office of each elected or appointed officer shall be three (3) years. All officers other than circuit visitors may be elected or appointed to the same office for four (4) consecutive terms after which a period of three (3) years shall elapse before they are again eligible for election or appointment to the same office, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws. An officer, elected or appointed to fill an unexpired term, who serves two (2) or more years, shall be considered to have completed one (1) term. Circuit visitors may serve an unlimited number of terms.
 - b. The President may be elected to succeed himself in office no more than three (3) times.
 - c. The term of office of each Board of Directors member shall be six (6) years. All Board of Directors members may be elected or appointed to the same office for two (2) consecutive terms after which a period of six (6) years shall elapse before they are again eligible for election to that board. A Board of Directors member appointed to fill an unexpired term who serves four (4) or more years, shall be considered to have completed one (1) term.

- d. The Board of Directors shall be composed of four (4) ordained ministers, four (4) commissioned ministers, and eight (8) laypersons with equal representation from each region of the District. The size of the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees shall be determined by its Bylaws.

5.4 Salaried Executives without Vote.

Executive level staff of the District and the Chief Executive Officer for the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees are not eligible for voting membership on any board of the District. They shall not at the same time hold an executive position to which they have been called and the Office of President, vice-president, Secretary, or Treasurer of the District. If such staff is elected or appointed to one of these positions, he must resign his executive office to accept such an election.

5.5 Time of Elections.

- a. The election of the President, the vice-presidents, the Secretary, approximately one-half of the Board of Directors, and the ratification of the circuit visitors shall take place at each District convention. At alternate conventions a District member shall be elected to serve on the LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations.
- b. Regional assemblies shall nominate for all positions with the exception of President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees.
- c. At their regional assemblies prior to the convention held in even-numbered years, the Metro-East Region and the West Region shall narrow the slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.
- d. At their regional assemblies prior to the convention held in odd-numbered years, the Metro-West Region and the North and East Region shall narrow the slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.

5.6 Nominating Committee

- a. The District convention shall elect a 12-member Nominating Committee consisting of one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister, and one (1) layperson from each region of the District and the President shall designate the Chairman thereof. The three committee members from each region shall serve as the regional nominating committee.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall meet at the call of the Secretary.
- c. The regional nominating committee shall draw up from its region a list of candidates and alternates for the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee in accordance with the provisions of Michigan District Bylaws 5.6, 5.7, and 5.13 and the Schedule of Elections. The regional nominating committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, as well as biographical data, and supply the regional assembly with this information. Following the regional nominations, the biographical data of persons nominated shall be transferred to the District Nominating Committee so that the District ballot may be drawn up.
- d. The District Nominating Committee shall draw up a list of candidates and alternates for the Secretary and the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, and transmit its final report to the Secretary no later than three (3) months before the convention. This report shall contain the occupation or profession, residency, and specific experience and qualifications for the proposed office.
- e. The Chairman or his designate shall submit the committee's report to the District convention.
- f. If between the regional assembly and the District convention a nominee becomes ineligible for election, the Elections Committee will fill the vacancy on the ballot with the person who received the next-highest number of votes.
- g. The convention shall have the right to alter the ballot by amendment. The amendment procedure shall include a motion, a second, and a majority vote on the amendment. Any delegate making a nomination for the floor shall have secured prior written consent and biographical data from the candidate whom he wishes to nominate as detailed in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 c. & d. This material shall then be submitted to the District Secretary.
- h. The Chairman shall have on hand at the convention a reserve list of nominees, approved by his committee, for use if required if a new board is to be elected. Whenever possible, however, the committee on nominations should be informed in advance if any new board is likely to be elected at a District convention, so that it may have a slate of candidates in readiness.

5.7 Floor Committee on Elections.

- a.** Elections shall be conducted by a Floor Committee on Elections, appointed by the President before the convention. The Secretary of the District shall furnish the committee a copy of suggested election procedures.
- b.** The committee shall consist of one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister and two (2) laypersons.
- c.** The committee may appoint tellers, who need not be voting delegates, to assist in conducting the elections. The Chairman shall give the list of tellers to the Secretary of the District, who shall announce them to the convention.
- d.** A regional floor committee on elections shall be appointed by the vice-president of that region to conduct the nominating elections at the regional assemblies and whose duties shall be consistent with the District Floor Committee on Elections.

5.8 Majority and Plurality of Votes.

A majority of all votes cast shall be required to elect.

5.9 Nominations and Election of the President.

- a.** The Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall elect a President from among the clergy of the Synod.
- b.** Every voting member congregation of the Michigan District may nominate one pastor as a candidate for the Office of President.
- c.** The nomination of each member congregation shall be submitted to the Secretary no later than four (4) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- d.** Candidates for the Office of President shall be the five (5) persons receiving the largest number of nominations in this congregational action.
- e.** The Secretary shall notify each candidate and shall secure his approval in writing for inclusion of his name on the convention ballot.
- f.** The Secretary shall prepare biographical information on the five candidates which shall be submitted for publication no later than two (2) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- g.** The Secretary shall submit the names of the five candidates for election of President to the District convention.
- h.** The convention shall have the right to alter the slate by majority amendment.
- i.** If no candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot, the name of the candidate who receives the smallest number of votes shall be dropped from the list and a new ballot taken. The procedure shall be continued until one (1) candidate has received a majority of the votes cast.

5.10 Nominations and Elections of Vice Presidents.

- a.** The Michigan District shall elect one vice-president for each region from the clergy roster of the District with residence in the designated region.
- b.** Every voting congregation of a region may nominate one pastor from its region as a candidate for the office of vice-president for its region.
- c.** The nomination shall be submitted to the Secretary no later than four (4) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- d.** The Secretary shall notify each nominee, secure his approval in writing, and secure biographical information for the inclusion of the five (5) names receiving the most nominations on the regional nominating ballot.
- e.** At the regional assemblies each region shall choose by ballot two (2) pastors as nominees for election by the District convention to the office of regional vice-president.

- f. Each voting delegate in the region may vote for two (2) nominees for vice-president, indicating his first and second choice. The tellers, appointed by the chairman, shall score two (2) points for each first choice and one (1) point for each second choice. The two (2) nominees receiving the largest number of points shall be candidates. The tellers shall report the results of the meeting to the chairman.
- g. The chairman of the regional assemblies shall report to the Secretary the names of the persons nominated for the office of vice-president along with the biographical data. The Secretary shall transmit such names to the Floor Committee on Elections.
- h. The Committee on Elections shall recap the information provided on qualifications and experience for each candidate and shall submit such information together with the ballot on which such election is to take place.
- i. The convention shall have the right to alter the slate at the proper time by majority amendment as outlined in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 g.

5.11 Ranking of Vice-Presidents.

After the vice-presidents have been elected, balloting will continue to determine their rank. The names of all four (4) vice-presidents will constitute the ballot for the First Vice-President, and voting continues until one is elected by majority vote. (If one is not elected on the first ballot, the name of the candidate who receives the smallest number of votes shall be dropped, and the balloting continues in this fashion until one is elected by majority vote.) The remaining three names constitute the ballot for Second Vice-President and the balloting continues as above. The two remaining names constitute the ballot for Third Vice-President, and the one not elected becomes Fourth Vice-President.

5.12 Election of Circuit Visitors.

The convention shall elect the circuit visitors as provided by the Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

5.13 Nominations of Board of Directors.

- a. Every voting congregation of a region nominating for the Board of Directors may nominate one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister and two (2) laypersons from its region for consideration as potential candidates by the regional nominating committee, which may consider additional candidates as it sees fit. (Cf. Bylaw 5.5 c. & d. for the nominating schedule.)
- b. The nominations shall be submitted to the Nominating Committee no later than four (4) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- c. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of up to four (4) ordained ministers, four (4) commissioned ministers, and eight (8) laypersons for the regional nominating ballot in accordance with Bylaw 5.6 c.
- d. At the regional assemblies each region shall choose by ballot two (2) ordained ministers, two (2) commissioned ministers, and four (4) laypersons from the slate prepared by the regional nominating committee as nominees for election by the District convention.
- e. Each voting delegate in the region may vote for two (2) ordained minister nominees, two (2) commissioned minister nominees, and four (4) layperson nominees. The two (2) ordained ministers, two (2) commissioned ministers, and four (4) laypersons receiving the largest number of votes shall be candidates. The tellers shall report the results of the meeting to the chairman.
- f. The chairman of the regional assemblies shall report to the Secretary the names of the persons nominated for the Board of Directors, along with the biographical data. The Secretary shall transmit such names to the Floor Committee on Elections.
- g. The Committee on Elections shall recap the information provided on qualifications and experience for each candidate and shall submit such information together with the ballot on which such election is to take place.
- h. The convention shall have the right to alter the slate at the proper time by majority amendment as outlined in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 g.

5.14 Election of Other Officers.

- a. Election of all officers other than the President and vice-presidents will be held at a special period of the convention session determined and announced by the President in advance.
- b. The Committee on Elections shall submit one (1) ballot containing the nominees furnished by the committee on nominations for all elective offices.
- c. The list of nominees for each respective office, together with their experience and qualifications, shall be distributed.

5.15 Order of Names on the Ballot.

The names of all candidates in all elections shall be placed on the ballot regionally and in alphabetical order but without any distinctive mark, unless otherwise stipulated by these Bylaws.

5.16 Notifications of Election to Office.

At the close of the convention, the Secretary of the District shall notify every officer and board member in writing of election.

5.17 Exception of Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees.

Members of the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees shall be elected as provided by the Fund's own Bylaws.

5.18 Induction and Beginning of Term of Office.

- a. All officers and directors elected at the convention shall be inducted into their respective offices in an installation ceremony (service) at the convention. Failure to hold the ceremony or the unavailability of inductees to attend the ceremony in person does not affect the time at which the inductees assume office.
- b. All officers shall begin their terms of office on October 1.

ARTICLE VI – VACANCIES AND SUCCESSION

6.1 Presidential Vacancy

- a. A vacancy in the Office of President shall be filled by the First Vice-President, who shall serve until the District convention.
- b. The First Vice-President may decline the Office of President; in which event:
 - 1. The next ranking vice-president shall become President of the District.
 - 2. All other vice-presidents shall move up one rank.
 - 3. The declining vice-president shall fill the last ranking vacant vice-presidency.
- c. The successor need not terminate his position as pastor of a congregation while completing the former President's unexpired term.
- d. If the Board of Directors determines that the President is temporarily unable to serve in that capacity because of prolonged illness or disability, the duties and responsibilities of the Office of President shall be assumed by the First Vice-President, who shall remain as the acting President until the Board of Directors determines that the illness or disability has been removed.

6.2 A vacancy in the office of vice-president shall be filled by advancing the lower ranking vice-presidents. An acting vice-president for the resulting vacancy may be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors, until the District convention.

6.3 A vacancy in the Board of Directors shall be filled by the board. The appointee shall serve the unexpired term.

6.4 A vacancy in the office of circuit visitor between conventions shall be filled by appointment by the President (Cf. Synod Bylaw 5.2.2.1).

6.5 A vacancy in any other elective office shall be filled by the Board of Directors. The appointee shall serve the unexpired term.

6.6 The Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees will fill vacancies in accordance with its own Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

7.1 The Board of Directors, with full authority, shall carry into execution the resolutions adopted by the District in convention. The Board of Directors shall create policies and monitor compliance to policies which govern the District and the Board of Directors shall monitor the performance of the District President, who shall be in charge of all District operations and staff. The Board of Directors shall carry out its functions as described by Synod Bylaw 4.5.1.

7.2 The Board of Directors is authorized to elect from its membership a chairman, vice chairman and secretary.

- a.** The Board of Directors is authorized to appoint such committees and task forces as it deems reasonable to assist it to carry out its work. Members of committees and task forces shall be members in good standing of congregations which are members of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (MCL 450.2527(3)).
- b.** All committees, commissions and task forces of the District shall report regularly to the Board of Directors. Such report may be made in writing or by a representative in person, provided, however, that the Board of Directors may require the report to be made by a representative in person.
- c.** The Board of Directors is authorized to extend calls on behalf of the District.

7.3 The membership of the Board of Directors shall be divided into two classes, the voting members and advisory members:

- a.** The voting members of the Board of Directors shall consist of one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister and two (2) laypersons elected from each of the regions within the District.
- b.** The Advisory members shall consist of the President, regional vice-presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and the chairman of the circuit visitors.

7.4 The Board of Directors shall meet at least five (5) times per year.

- a.** A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members and the majority of those present and voting shall be sufficient to carry a motion or resolution.
- b.** Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, the chairman of the Board or any three (3) voting members of the board. Advance notice of special meetings shall be given to all members.
- c.** A member of the Board of Directors or of a committee designated by the board may participate in a meeting by means of telephone conference or other means of remote communication by which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this subsection constitutes presence in person at the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII - OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATION

8.1 President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the District, and between conventions and in the recess of the Board of Directors, shall have the general control and management of its business and affairs, subject to these Bylaws. He shall preside at all District conventions. The President shall carry out the duties and responsibilities assigned to his office by the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod (Cf. Constitution Art. XI; Synod Bylaws 4.4.1ff.). He shall be an ex-officio member of all commissions or committees in the District with the right to speak but not to vote. He shall have the right to designate any one of the vice-presidents to sit in his place at meetings of the Board of Directors or any of the District's commissions or committees. As the chief executive officer, he shall manage and supervise the District staff. The Office of District President shall be full-time. He shall not be in charge of a congregation, nor hold a chair at any educational institution or fill any other full-time executive office of the District. This prohibition does not apply when a vice president assumes the Office of District President to complete an unexpired term.

- 8.2 Vice Presidents.** In the event that the Office of President shall become vacant or in the event of the absence of the President or his disability to discharge the duties of his office, such duties shall for the time being devolve upon the vice-presidents in order according to their ranking as further provided in these Bylaws. The vice-presidents shall also do and perform such other acts as the President may from time to time authorize them to do.
- 8.3 Secretary.** The Secretary of the District shall keep the minutes of the conventions of the District in books provided for that purpose; he shall attend to the giving and receiving of all notices of the District; he shall sign, with the President or a vice-president, in the name of the District, all contracts authorized by the Board of Directors, and when necessary shall fix the corporate seal of the District thereto; and his minutes and records shall be opened to examination to any member of the District at all reasonable times; and he shall have such additional duties as may be delegated to him by the convention or the Board of Directors.
- 8.4 Assistant Secretaries.** The Board of Directors may appoint assistant secretaries who shall have the authority of the Secretary when delegated by the Secretary or the Board of Directors, or when the Secretary is unavailable due to disability or absence from the District.
- 8.5 Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall have oversight of all funds and securities of the District and shall report to the Board of Directors and the District convention the financial status of the District. The Treasurer, the President of the District and/or the President's designated staff persons shall have authority to sign on behalf of the District all checks, notes, or other official documents. The Treasurer shall also require on behalf of the Board of Directors the annual audit of all District funds. He shall be bonded for the discharge of all his duties as Treasurer, the bond being of such character, form and in such amount as the Board of Directors may require.
- 8.6 Circuit Visitors.** Circuit visitors shall serve in accordance with the duties assigned to this position as provided by the By-laws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. During the year when there is no Synod or District convention, circuit convocations will be held under the leadership of the circuit visitors and members of the circuit forum.

ARTICLE IX - FISCAL AND AUDITING

- 9.1 District Budget.** The District budget shall be determined by the Board of Directors through its policies, but no budget shall be approved which allows for expenditures greater than receipts and other funds projected to be available in any given year.
- 9.2 Auditing.** All the District's financial accounts shall be audited at least once every year by a firm of certified public accountants designated by the Board of Directors.
- 9.3** No commission or committee of the District except the Church Extension Fund which is a subsidiary corporation of the District shall maintain a separate bank account without the consent of the Board of Directors. In the event such consent is given by the Board of Directors, such account or accounts shall be audited at the same time and in the same manner as heretofore provided.
- 9.4** The Board of Directors shall develop its own board policy manual for proper governance of the District.

ARTICLE X - THE CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

- 10.1** The Church Extension Fund shall adopt rules to govern its proceedings not inconsistent with these Bylaws. (See Bylaws of the Church Extension Fund attached to Bylaws of the Michigan District.)

ARTICLE XI - RECONCILIATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 11.1** The District shall follow the principles, structures, procedures, and membership described in Synod Bylaws 1.10 and 2.14 to 2.17 with regard to reconciliation and dispute resolution.

ARTICLE XII – COMMISSIONS AND TASK FORCES

- 12.1** The District convention may create commissions and task forces for special purposes.
- 12.2** Task forces and commissions established by a convention and existing at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws shall continue

their powers, duties and jurisdiction until further resolution of the convention. No future commission or task force shall have duration for longer than the time between conventions.

12.3 A convention resolution creating a commission or task force shall define its powers, duties, duration and jurisdiction and establish its budget.

12.4 A commission or task force created by a convention shall make period reports of its activities to the convention and to the Board of Directors between conventions (Cf. Bylaw 7.2b).

12.5 Members of commissions and task forces shall be members in good standing of congregations which are members of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE XIII - HANDBOOK

13.1 The Board of Directors shall cause to be prepared, within three (3) months after the adjournment of each District convention, a District handbook.

13.2 The handbook shall include:

- a. The current Bylaws of the District as they may be amended.
- b. The names of all officers and board members.
- c. Such other information as the convention and/or the Board of Directors may direct.

13.3 A copy of the handbook shall be furnished to:

- a. Each member congregation of the District.
- b. Each officer and board member.
- c. Such other persons as the convention and/or the Board of Directors may direct.

ARTICLE XIV - REPEAL AND SAVING CLAUSE

14.1 Any and all bylaws previously adopted by the convention of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are hereby repealed.

14.2 If any section, paragraph, clause or provision of these Bylaws or any amendments thereto, shall be held invalid under the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, or under the laws of the State of Michigan, the invalidity of such paragraph, section, clause or provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of these Bylaws or amendments thereto.

14.3 All acts, resolutions or orders or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of these Bylaws, and any amendments thereto, to the extent of such conflict, are hereby repealed and all other acts, resolutions or orders or parts thereof not in conflict with the provisions of these Bylaws, or amendments thereto, shall continue in full force and effect.

ARTICLE XV - INDEMNIFICATION

15.1 Those directors duly elected or appointed to the Board of Directors who do not receive anything of value from this corporation for serving as a director other than reasonable per diem compensation and/or reimbursement for actual, reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by such director in service of the capacity as a director shall be deemed a “volunteer director” for all purposes hereunder.

15.2 A volunteer director shall not be personally liable to the corporation or its membership and/or members for monetary damages for any breach of the director’s fiduciary duty except for liability arising from or relating to:

- a. A breach of director’s duty of loyalty to the corporation or its members;

- b. Actual omissions not in good faith or the involvement of intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;
- c. An act in violation of the provisions of Michigan law, specifically MCLA 450.2551(1);
- d. Any transaction from which a director derives an improper personal benefit;
- e. Any act or omission resulting in liability occurring before January 1, 1988;
- f. Any act or omission that is grossly negligent.

15.3 The corporation shall assume all liability to any person or entity other than the corporation or its members for all acts or omissions of a volunteer director occurring on or after January 1, 1988.

15.4 The corporation shall to the fullest extent permitted under Michigan law, indemnify those persons serving in the position of, or at the request of the corporation as director, officer, trustee, committee member, commission member, employee or agent against expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by a person in connection with any actions, suits or proceedings, formal or informal, relating to the service of said individual on behalf of the corporation if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the corporation or its members, or with respect to any criminal action or proceeding if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct engaged in was unlawful. The corporation, through its Board of Directors, shall have such further or other authority to indemnify directors, officers, employees or agents consistent with the provisions of Michigan law.

ARTICLE XVI - AMENDMENTS

16.1 Amendments may be made to the Bylaws by the District in convention providing they are not contrary to the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod.

16.2 Proposed amendments shall be presented in writing to a convention of the District upon review and approval by the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 [a]).

16.3 Proposed amendments shall be specified as bylaws amendments.

16.4 Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the District committee on new and revised constitutions and they shall report to a convention floor committee.

16.5 Proposed amendments to the Bylaws may be adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting.

16.6 Following a convention of the Synod, Bylaw amendments necessary for compliance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod may be made by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors upon review and approval by the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 [a]). All such amendments will be reported to the District.

BYLAWS
CHURCH EXTENSION FUND OF THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
(As amended by the Michigan District Convention, June 25, 2018)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Church Extension Fund is to administer a fund and acquire assets to assist by loans, grants, or otherwise, primarily to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, congregations of the Michigan District, individuals serving as professional church workers within the Michigan District, LCMS schools and colleges, entities and associations qualifying as Michigan District recognized service organizations, entities and associations qualifying as Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod recognized service organizations, and entities owned and/or operated by member congregations. The Church Extension Fund may also assist other LCMS Districts, through their respective Church Extension Funds, by purchasing or participating, in whole or in part, in loans or investments, of other LCMS Districts or the Lutheran Church Extension Fund of the LCMS. The purpose for which funds and assistance may be provided shall include, but not limited to, acquiring property, erecting buildings, purchasing equipment, acquiring housing and supporting projects and the operations of the above. The primary purpose, however, of the Church Extension Fund shall be to contribute to the ministry and purposes of the Michigan District and its member congregations.

II. MEMBERSHIP

The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall consist of nine (9) elected trustees.

1. The elected trustees shall consist of three (3) persons duly rostered in the LCMS and called or assigned within the Michigan District, and, six (6) laypersons. Trustees shall be elected by the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at its regular Convention in the following manner:
 - a. The District Nominating Committee shall draw up a list of candidates and alternates for the Church Extension Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate and prepare biographical data, including occupation or profession, residency, and specific experience and qualifications for the proposed office, for each candidate. Board of Trustee candidates shall have an understanding of the Church Extension program and/or demonstrate expertise in fields or areas closely related to Church Extension activities, such as knowledge of banking, investments, accounting, law, real estate, business management and financial planning.
 - b. Trustees must be members in good standing of congregations in the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. No congregation of the District shall have more than one (1) member [including ordained, commissioned or layperson] from its congregation as a voting member of the Board of Trustees.
 - c. Election of Church Extension Board of Trustees shall take place at the same time and in the same manner as the election of all District Officers and Board Members, other than the District President and Vice Presidents, in accordance with procedures outlined in Articles 5.18, 5.19, and 5.20 of the Bylaws of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
2. Elections of trustees to fill the places of those whose terms of office expire shall take place at the last regular convention of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, occurring prior to the expiration of the terms of their predecessors. Approximately one—half of the trustees will be elected at each convention of the Michigan District.
3. The trustees shall be elected for a term of six (6) years. They may be elected for two (2) consecutive terms, after which a period of three (3) years shall elapse before they are again eligible for election as trustees.
4. Vacancies caused by death, resignation, removal, declination to serve or otherwise, may be filled by the remaining trustees, subject to ratification by the Board of Directors of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
5. All trustees elected at the Convention shall begin their terms of office on the first of October following election.

III. ORGANIZATION

1. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall elect a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers and subcommittees as it considers necessary for the efficient conduct of its business.
2. The Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer elected by the Church Extension Board of Trustees at the October meeting following the Convention of the Michigan District shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Church Extension Fund.
3. Legal documents executed in the name of the Church Extension Fund shall bear the signatures of any two members of the Executive Committee or such officer or officers as the trustees shall authorize by resolution duly adopted in accordance with these Bylaws.
4. The trustees may appoint task-oriented committees to assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities.

IV. MEETINGS

1. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall schedule regular meetings as the business of the Board shall require, but not less than four times per year.
2. Special meetings may be called by the chairman of the Board or by any four (4) trustees.
3. A majority of the trustees of the Church Extension Board of Trustees shall constitute a legal quorum at all regular and special meetings of the Board.
4. The Executive Committee of the Church Extension Board of Trustees shall meet at the call of the Chairman to conduct and act on matters of business requiring attention between regular meetings of the Church Extension Board of Trustees. A majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee shall be required to take any action. All such actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Church Extension Board of Trustees.
5. A member of the Church Extension Board of Trustees or of a committee designated by said board may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or other means of remote communication if all individuals who are participating in the meeting can communicate with the other participants.

V. ADMINISTRATION

1. The Church Extension Fund may, in its corporate name, take, hold and manage all property, real and personal, notes, bonds, mortgages, land contracts, leases, evidences of indebtedness, loans and property and all property real and personal, tangible and intangible, and assets devised, bequeathed, transferred, leased, or conveyed to the Church Extension Fund absolutely or in trust for the purposes outlined in Section I of these Bylaws.
2. The Church Extension Fund may, in its corporate name, invest and reinvest the personal property and assets in its hands and under its control as trustees; and sell, convey by deed, land contract or lease, mortgage or hold in trust and manage any real estate held by them as such trustees; all in accordance with the manner and as specified in the Statutes of the State of Michigan in such case made and provided.
3. The Church Extension Fund may accept gifts or bequests in trust or otherwise, and employ, manage or retain such property, real or personal, devised or bequeathed, on such terms, conditions, or policies approved by the Board of Trustees.
4. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall adopt rules and regulations in the interest of the orderly administration of its objectives.
5. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall employ and appoint a Chief Executive Officer, employ and appoint any other such officers or employees deemed necessary to conduct its business affairs in an orderly manner, at a rate of compensation as deemed proper and fair by the Church Extension Board of Trustees.
6. Those trustees duly-elected or appointed to the Board of Trustees who do not receive anything of value from this corporation for serving as a trustee other than reasonable per diem compensation and/or reimbursement for actual reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by such trustee in service of the capacity as a trustee shall be deemed a "volunteer trustee" for all purposes hereunder (being deemed and defined as a "volunteer director" for all purposes under Michigan law and statutes).

7. A volunteer trustee shall not be personally liable to the corporation or its membership and/or members for monetary damages for any breach of the trustee's fiduciary duty except for liability arising from or relating to:
 - a. A breach of trustee's duty of loyalty to the corporation or its members;
 - b. Actual omissions not in good faith or the involvement of intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;
 - c. An act in violation of the provisions of Michigan law, specifically MCLA 450.2551(1);
 - d. Any transaction from which a trustee derives an improper personal benefit;
 - e. Any act or omission resulting in liability occurring before January 1, 1988;
 - f. Any act or omission that is grossly negligent.
8. The corporation shall assume all liability to any person or entity other than the corporation or its members for all acts or omissions of a volunteer trustee occurring on or after January 1, 1988.
9. The corporation shall, to the fullest extent permitted under Michigan law, indemnify those persons serving in the position of, or at the request of the corporation, as director, officer, trustee, committee member, employee, or agent against expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by a person in connection with any actions, suits, or proceedings, formal or informal, relating to the service of said individual on behalf of the corporation if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the corporation or its members, or with respect to any criminal action or proceeding if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct engaged in was unlawful. The corporation, through its Board of Trustees, shall have such further or other authority to indemnify trustees, committee members, officers, employees, or agents consistent with the provisions of Michigan law.

VI. RELATIONSHIP TO THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT

1. The Church Extension Fund shall be subject to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod insofar as said Constitution and Bylaws do not conflict with the laws of the State of Michigan.
2. In the event of the dissolution of the Church Extension Fund as a Michigan Church Trustee Corporation, all property and assets to which it holds title, or over which it has control, shall be transferred forthwith to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or to its nominee.
3. In the event that the Michigan District no longer exists, then references to the "Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" or the "Michigan District" in these Bylaws, and references to actions thereof, shall be deemed to mean, respectively, the congregations that comprised the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and their actions in convention or at a meeting of such congregations.

VII. AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws of the Church Extension Fund may be amended by a majority vote of those entitled to vote at the Convention of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.